EAST BAY EXPRESS

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CULTURE SPY 16

FULL DISCLOSURE 10

BAY AREA TOLL LANES COULD LOSE MONEY

A Cal engineering prof believes the proposal to turn carpool lanes into toll lanes will fail

By Robert Gammon

Bay Area transit planners want to convert all of the region's carpool lanes into toll lanes. They say that toll lanes will not only ease traffic congestion but also generate much needed funds for road and mass transportation projects. They estimate that turning the Bay Area's 500 miles of carpool lanes into toll lanes, along with adding 300 miles of new toll lanes, will generate $6.1 billion in profit over the next 25 years. So far the plan, which is now in the state legislature, has generated little opposition. But one UC Berkeley engineering professor who has studied the effectiveness of carpool and toll lanes says the idea is wildly optimistic, and he predicts it will ultimately waste huge amounts of taxpayer money. *Story inside*

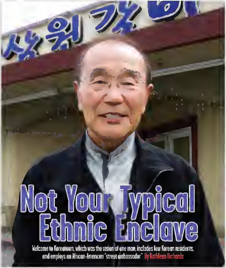
STILL SMILIN'

is a "no-harsh zone"

MOVIES 37

THE BOXER AND THE SPY

Tyson has too much emotion, *The Limits of Control* too little.



Not Your Typical Ethnic Enclave

Welcome to Koreatown, which was the vision of one man, includes few Korean residents, and employs an African-American "street ambassador" By Kathleen Richards

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On the Cover Alex Hahn. *Photo by Ali Thanasalla*

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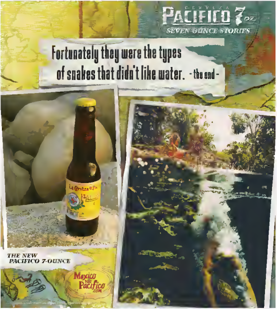
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NEWS & OPINION

EAST BAY EXPRESS
BAND ON THE RUN

LETTERS

[illegible]

You Deserve a Pet Rock

Recently, while scanning through your *East Bay Express*, an article caught my eye (and animal lover of all wildlife too!) written by a Jay Youngdahl.

Mr. Youngdahl: I assume by your column that you are another one of those ruthless animal abusers — "shame on you !"

This problem you speak of animals having too much rights!! Mr. Youngdahl, getting back to your Biblical verses: I definitely disagree with your theory: the Lord (God) put every living species on this earth — his creation Jay!! Not yours, or those that choose to travel there own destinations in life. So the chimp was treated with Xanax; is he depriving you Jay?

You should be given a Pet Rock on a leash to keep you company.

Sorry for you Jay!!

Alice Noriega, San Pablo

You're All Speciesists

There are just a bunch of radical speciesists concerned more about their own profits than the welfare of others. I totally support the care and welfare of animals. How many more animals will give their life for these humans to keep denouncing their value and right to exist? This is one of the prime reasons animals need to have laws that protect them from radical people like this.

John Lopez, Reno, Nevada

Letters Policy

Please provide your full name, address, and daytime phone number, although we will only print your name, city, and affiliation. Send submissions to Letters@EastBayExpress.com or Letters, *East Bay Express*, 1335 Stanford Ave., Suite 100, Emeryville, CA 94608. Letters are edited for length and clarity.

Yanquis Are Animals

A riddle circulated in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s that went like this:

Q. The Yankees send armies around the planet to kill people, so how come they love their pets so much?

A. That's because they have a lot more in common with animals.

Antonio Travarra, San Leandro

Like the Gulag

This is a false dichotomy. Animal welfare is the issue. Of course they don't have the same rights to vote or drive a car or own guns that we do.

Those rights are irrelevant to their nature. But rabbits should not be blinded for the cosmetics industry and the recent prop on the horrendous conditions in which farm animals are raised was long overdue. And Maoists shouting for humans?!! The man killed a hundred million Chinese.

Of course, a small-time leftist intellectual crook like Jay Youngdahl would never figure that out.

Animals are friends to the cosmetics industry in the same way that slave laborers in the Gulag are friends to Stalin.

I willingly spend money on my cats; I do not prefer to spend money on street bums.

Al Blue, Richmond

[illegible] 4/1

A Gym Worth Signing Up For

Your story on underground gym in W. Oakland, interesting — I got some gym equipment maybe they could use, and also a garden, maybe they would be interested in home-grown vegetables from the area? Plus, I'm a "chef gardener." Been trying for years to work with new people in the area.

A.L. Brown, Oakland

[illegible] Music 4/1

Suckers!

So even a credible journalistic endeavor such as the *East Bay Express* has now been hoodwinked by the scammers in "The New When."

Those jerks are simply running a con game. They owe me money, and they owe a bunch to others in the local music business community. Their name-change game is not a means of avoiding unwanted fame and dodging reviewers pigeonholing them (as they claim); that's just a ruse! Instead, that is simply their shrewd device to allow them to skip out on debts owed.

And debts not just for rehearsal space rental, studio time, freelance engineers, side men, CD pressings, photographs, bio writing, web site development, web hosting, truck rentals, and unpaid bar and restaurant bills all over the East Bay for their infamous post-performance CD-release parties (of which there have been many) — no, they also owe money for publishing royalties to their song co-writers ... me, to name one.

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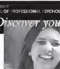

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And now they've managed to get your newsweekly to feature them on the cover. My god, you'll run a cover story on just about any ridiculous figure in the local music scene who can spin a good tale and convince you they have some new perspective, won't you?!

Milo Hurwitz, manager the Matches, vice president of marketing and artist development Talking House Records, Oakland

[illegible]

If It Smells Like the Onion

Throughout my read of this article I continually checked the masthead and url (to confirm (double-confirm, triple-, etc.) that I was not reading *The Onion*. Really? All of this is real? Thanks for the enlightenment about how far greed has progressed in our country.

[no name given author couldn't be reached]

[illegible]

It Tastes Like the Onion, Too

Someone who sends me more than a few links to articles from *The Onion* sent me this link and I swear I thought I was reading a bogus review until I saw the Cafe Gratitude reference.

The thought that there are "perpetual out-the-door lines" is simply frightening to me. But it continues to underscore the fact that Berkeley residents are the most bored people on the face of the Earth. And will stop at nothing in their quest to counter that by being the weirdest people on the face of the Earth.

I can only thank the author for the honest, and pretty freakin funny, review of the tripe (face boogie) aftertaste of the "burger."

[no name given author couldn't be reached]

Too Expensive for Compost

It was awesome, creative, inventive, and appealing, but there were loopholes which gave you away — big-time. The Second Life Cafe's address, phone number, lack of health inspectors, business insurance, lines out the door patronage and the "fermented tomato Hooch" all ensured a very passable *giggle*. Your prices were pretty outrageous, too, for an establishment willing to accept food stamps and barter. But hey. A joke's a joke, and we can all smile knowing that we, too, can create and compost our own, making "getting back to the basics" during this economic adventure a lesson in true survival skills. So ... pass me a 'burger with a side-salad.

E. J. Dolrane, Oakland

[illegible]

Wait ... What Day Is It?

It is a sad commentary on the state of publishing that for a moment I forgot it was April Fool's Day and I actually thought you were serious. Because, frankly, none of the ideas in this article are no more ludicrous than some proposals for "saving" newspapers that I've seen in various venues. As a freelance writer, however, I'm pretty sure however the "publishing crisis" shakes down, writers are gonna get screwed out of money.

Jesse Powell, Oakland

Wait a Minute

I have to admit I was preparing to write an excoriating letter to the editor decrying the death of journalistic standards (although how there is a typo on the first page of the article, or rather a mis-capitalization) ... until I realized it was April 1. And then it was hilarious.

But as Jane says, frightening that it took me more than half the article for the suggestions to cross from "reasonable-ish" to "insane" to "wait a minute."

Megan Wygant, El Cerrito

[illegible]

Keep Up the Fake Stories

Thank you. This issue was hilarious! I read every article word-for-word. I couldn't help myself. And I laughed out loud. The letters are just as much fun as the articles. (I particularly liked the thought of my beloved "East Bay Express" getting $57 million in bailout money. God knows you need some cash.)

Thanks again. And keep up the good work.

Jerry Massier, Oakland

Not Funny, Sad

It is a sad commentary on today's society that what was intended as comedy in your April 1 edition turned out to be IRONY.

Robert B. Water, Hayward

[illegible]

We Can Make a Difference

What I want to say to women and girls is that it is not important how others see us, but it is important how we see ourselves. We are responsible for our lives and our actions and we are capable of changing our experiences. We are the well, and our source is the water within the well that is always nourishing, healing, soothing, restoring, rejuvenating, and loving. The source that is within us wants us to know that we matter and that we are always good enough in whatever we do.

It is important that we learn to love ourselves no matter what others think or say about us, that we see the truth of who we are, that we understand how one person can impact another's life through words, actions, and experiences. If we remember that we matter and that what we feel and what we think matters we will not become victims or victimizers.

It is important that women and girls realize our worth and value in changing what is hurting us in a country and in nation. Through our experiences, our words, and our actions we can make a difference. A difference that is built on relationships that are inclusive, healing, supportive, restorative, encouraging, and inspiring. A difference that encourages us to tap into the source of love that we all possess but sometimes are unable to express or connect to. We are the light bearers, we are the leaders, and we are the arms and hands that supports the endings, beginnings, and the in between times of our life experiences.

Lorena Garrett-Brewster, director, Women-as-a-library, Aptos, CA

Correction

In our 4/29 food review of the Beta Lounge, we misprinted the restaurant's phone number. It's 510-845-3200.

HOG WILD

The mainstream media goes nuts over the swine flu while ignoring the fact that the regular flu is far more deadly

By Robert Gammon

The so-called swine flu pandemic turned out to be a true low-point for the mainstream media. For more than a week, the story dominated the front pages of daily newspapers and Internet news sites while cable television chased it 24/7. It was a made-for-mainstream media event, a supposedly deadly virus with a dirty-sounding name that you could catch if someone sneezed in your face or shook your hand. Just watching the tube or picking up your local newspaper made you think we were on the precipice of Armageddon. There was only one big problem. The wall-to-wall coverage was entirely overblown, making it a textbook example of what's wrong with today's news media.

Hidden among the breathless coverage was this important fact — about 36,000 people die from run-of-the-mill flu every year in this country. And only one person has died so far from the dreaded swine flu in the United States. But the MSM drowned this inconvenient truth in a torrent of photos of masked health workers and endless lectures about the importance of washing one's hands. Not surprisingly, panicked educators quickly started closing schools around the nation, including twelve in the Bay Area, one of which was Berkeley's Malcolm X Elementary School. It was classic overkill, an absurd tribute to a dying medium's need to reestablish its relevancy via Internet page views, newsstand sales, and Nielsen Ratings.

By week's end, even the Mexican health authorities who launched the scare with the proclamation that the virus had killed more than 150 people there had quietly cut the death toll to 25. Sure, people were getting sick, but they overwhelmingly reported a mild to moderate illness, less worrisome than the average flu. In the end the swine flu near-pandemic of 2009 appeared destined for history's scrap heap. Another next big thing that failed to materialize.

Justice in Chauncey Bailey Case

Speaking of overkill in the Bay Area news media, it's been the murder investigation of journalist Chauncey Bailey. The sheer amount of time and newsprint devoted to one crime has been somewhat embarrassing, considering that more than 100 people are murdered every year in Oakland and none receives this type of coverage. Still, the excellent work by the Chauncey Bailey Project and the *San Francisco Chronicle* did uncover systemic problems within the Oakland Police Department, while exposing a police chief who's not ready for primetime and helping prompt some real justice, too.

First, the justice part. A grand jury last week indicted Yusuf Bey IV, the CEO of the defunct Your Black Muslim Bakery, for allegedly ordering the murder of Bailey and two other men. The charges could result in the death penalty or life in prison for Bey, who has long been suspected of being the mastermind of Bailey's August 2007 assassination. It took a long time to bring Bey to justice in large part because OPD decided to assign one of Bey's friends, Sergeant Derwin Longmire, to lead the investigation.

Last week, we also learned from the project another reason for why Acting Police Chief Howard Jordan should not become the department's permanent top cop. Jordan had staunchly defended Longmire last year, saying he had done nothing wrong, even though there was compelling evidence that the homicide detective had no intention of going after Bey. Then last week, Jordan said if he had to do it all over again, he would have taken Longmire off the case because he was no longer sure the sergeant had been objective. That sounds a lot like closing the barn door after the horse ran away. It's pretty clear that Longmire had no business being anywhere near that investigation, and Jordan showed his true colors by defending him while he was still under investigation by both internal affairs and the state Attorney General's Office.

Spain to Investigate John Yoo

In other investigation news, a Spanish judge announced last week that he was opening a sweeping war-crimes probe of former Bush-era officials for their roles in authorizing and carrying out torture. The targets of the investigation by Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzon, most famous for going after Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, presumably will include UC Berkeley law school professor John Yoo, author of the infamous "Torture Memos."

But while Garzon was tackling the torture issue head on, President Obama was trying to walk a tightrope. First, he made a significant statement last week, telling reporters that he considers waterboarding to be torture. But then the president stopped short of saying whether Bush-era officials should be investigated for violating US and international laws. He also characterized the legal opinions that authorized torture — written mostly by Yoo — as a "mistake," and not criminal acts.

Three-dot Roundup

Speaking of torture, an eye-opening interview with a former FBI lead interrogator by *Newsweek* magazine revealed how traditional interrogation methods worked much better than waterboarding and sleep deprivation. ... Bad poll numbers plague the series of ballot measures in the May 19 special election, with five of the six propositions losing by 9 percent to 27 percent. ... AC Transit is planning to cut bus service again just months after the agency raised fares and following promises that last November's parcel tax measure would avoid both. ... The Contra Costa County District Attorney backed off his threat to stop prosecuting misdemeanor crimes. ... The lawyer for ex-BART cop Johannes Mehserle is trying to have the Alameda County District Attorney's Office disqualified from his murder case. ... State Attorney General Jerry Brown had his tires stolen outside his Oakland hills home. And the *Chronicle* reported that Oakland's part-time mayor, Ron Dellums, is seeking a pay raise at a time when the city is facing an $83 million shortfall. ■

Seven Days is culled from our news blog, 92510, which you can find at EastBayExpress.com/Blogs

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THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL

ECO WATCH

DO PLUG-IN HYBRIDS FIGHT GLOBAL WARMING?

They do, according to a recent Cal study, but only if you live in a state that doesn't rely on coal power.

By Robert Gammon

Many environmentalists believe that plug-in hybrid cars could be an effective tool in the fight against global warming. Plug-ins have the potential to lower greenhouse gas emissions because they run partly on electricity and thus get much better gas mileage than traditional hybrid vehicles. But some critics note that plug-ins aren't all that eco-conscious. They use electricity, after all, and many US power plants generate a lot of carbon dioxide. Recent studies, including one from UC Berkeley, resolve this controversy. They suggest that plug-in hybrids will indeed reduce greenhouse gas emissions — but only if you live in a state like California, that doesn't rely on coal power.

One of the more recent studies, conducted by UC Berkeley researchers and published by the Brookings Institution, shows that plug-in hybrids can decrease greenhouse gas emissions in California by more than 60 percent in comparison to conventional cars and by nearly 50 percent when compared to traditional hybrids. California doesn't generate much energy from coal, so when you recharge a plug-in here, it doesn't produce a lot of CO2. "Coal is about as bad as you can get" in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, explained Derek Lemoine, a UC Berkeley doctoral student who was one of the study's authors.

In the Bay Area, plug-in hybrids will be especially effective in fighting global warming because Pacific Gas & Electric gets very little energy from coal power. In fact, coal only represented 4 percent of the total electric power that PG&E sold to its retail customers in 2007, according to the most recent data available from the utility. PG&E's largest supply of energy — 47 percent — came from natural gas-powered plants, followed by nuclear power at 23 percent, hydroelectric power at 13 percent, and renewable energy sources, such as biomass, geothermal, and wind power, at 12 percent. Of those, only natural-gas-powered plants produce significant amounts of CO2, although still much less than coal plants do.

Even if California relied entirely on natural gas, then plug-ins would still make sense. Plug-in cars powered by electricity generated from natural gas produce 54 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than conventional cars and 40 percent fewer than traditional hybrid cars, the UC Berkeley study revealed.

By contrast, the study also showed that plug-in hybrids powered by coal plants end up producing 25 percent more greenhouse gas emissions than traditional hybrid cars. As result, buying a plug-in would actually contribute to global warming if you live in an area, such as the South, that relies heavily on coal power. In fact, Lemoine's data was based on greenhouse gas emissions from newer, cleaner coal plants. So the amount of CO2 that would be generated by widespread use of plug-in vehicles would be even worse than the study predicted in areas that depend heavily on older, less-efficient coal plants. "We were looking at efficient coal-fired plants," he explained. "But many existing coal-fired plants are less efficient."

Another problem for plug-ins, according to the UC Berkeley study, is that they're not yet cost-efficient for consumers, and won't be until the large batteries they use become cheaper and gasoline prices rise. However, many consumers may choose to buy plug-ins anyway because they're good for the environment — at least in California and other places not dependent on coal. Plus, if researchers can discover how to effectively sequester CO2 emissions, then plug-ins may end up making sense even in coal-powered states.

As the use of renewable energy sources rises, the effectiveness of plug-ins will rise with them. According to the UC Berkeley study, a plug-in powered by renewable energy produces 99 percent fewer greenhouse gases than both a conventional car and a traditional hybrid.

Wind energy may be the most effective source of renewable power for plug-ins. The reason is that most plug-in hybrid owners will recharge their cars' batteries at night, while they're sleeping. And it just so happens that wind energy is the best renewable at night, Lemoine noted, because that's when the wind blows hardest. Now if we could only get the wind-power companies to start using turbines that don't kill so many birds, we'd be in business.

New Rules Will Still Harm Plug-ins

Earlier this year we published a story about how the California Air Resources Board was considering a set of strict new regulations that threatened to put many small plug-in start-up companies out of business, including 3Prong Power of Berkeley (see, "Who's Killing the Plug-

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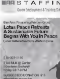

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In Hybrid, January 19, 2009). But after our story came out, the board ordered its staff to come up with a compromise measure. However, the "compromise" could go before the board later this month, and it's creating serious financial concerns for small companies like 3Prong.

Originally, the air board's staff wanted to force start-up companies to pay for expensive air emissions testing, because even though plug-ins can produce fewer greenhouse gases, staffers were concerned that they also could generate more air pollutants, such as unburned gasoline vapors. Plug-in conversion companies maintained that those fears were unfounded, claiming they had devised a simple fix that would make the plug-ins run cleaner than traditional hybrids. They also didn't object to the testing per se, but said the expense — the tests cost between $30,000 and $115,000 — would bankrupt them.

After studying the issue for a few months, the air board staff now recommends that small companies don't pay for the tests until they have converted at least ten traditional hybrids into plug-ins. But Daniel Sherwood, co-owner of 3Prong, says that his company won't be able to generate enough profit from selling ten conversion kits to pay for the tests. The conversions sell for about $8,700, including installation. So the new rules will have the same effect as the old ones — they'll put small companies like 3Prong out of business. Sherwood plans to urge the air board to allow small companies to sell 50 conversion kits before having to pay for the tests, allowing business owners to generate enough revenue to cover the costs.

Tom Bates and Pacific Steel Casting

Two weeks ago, Eco Watch told you about how the Bay Area Air Quality Management District had conspired with a longtime Berkeley polluter, Pacific Steel Casting, to withhold vital public documents. At the time, we weren't sure of the role played by Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, who had requested a copy of Pacific Steel Casting's "Odor Management Plan," which details the company's proposal to limit noxious emissions. But Bates also sits on the air district's board of directors, so it wasn't clear whether he knew that his request would result in district staffers inviting Pacific Steel Casting to sue the district so that they wouldn't have to release the odor management documents to the public.

But then last week, Bates called Eco Watch and said that he hadn't received the two phone messages left with his staffers seeking comment for the story. Bates said he wasn't attempting to duck questions, and maintained that he had nothing to do with the air district staff's actions. He said that after Pacific Steel Casting produced the odor management plan last October, he requested a copy, and that district staff gave him one that was highly redacted.

Bates said he then showed the redacted document to a toxics expert on the city payroll who said the air district had no right to blacken so much of the document. The air district had maintained that the redacted portions represented Pacific Steel Casting's trade secrets. But Bates said he told the air district staff that he wanted the whole document, calling the redacted version "unacceptable." Soon after, Pacific Steel Casting sued to stop its release, he said. But when Eco Watch asked for a copy of the redacted document, Bates said he "threw it away." ■

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FULL DISCLOSURE

BAY AREA TOLL LANES COULD LOSE MONEY

A UC Berkeley engineering professor believes the proposal by transit planners to turn carpool lanes into toll lanes will waste taxpayers' funds.

By Robert Gammon

Robert Gammon

Carpool lanes could be transformed into toll lanes.

Bay Area transit planners want to convert all of the region's carpool lanes into toll lanes. They say that toll lanes will not only ease traffic congestion, but also generate much-needed funds for road and mass transportation projects. They estimate that turning the Bay Area's 500 miles of carpool lanes into toll lanes, along with adding 300 miles of new toll lanes, will generate $6.1 billion in profit over the next 25 years. So far, the plan, which is now in the state legislature, has generated little opposition. But one UC Berkeley engineering professor who has studied the effectiveness of carpool and toll lanes says the idea is wildly optimistic, and he predicts it will ultimately waste huge amounts of taxpayer money.

For years, professor **Pravin Varaiya** of UC Berkeley's electrical engineering and computer sciences department has pored over extensive amounts of CalTrans data. He concludes that the new toll lanes will lose money for two main reasons: In less-congested areas, not enough people will use them. And on the Bay Area's more-congested freeways, heavy demand from carpoolers won't leave enough room for those single-occupancy vehicles that would pay the new toll. "I'm willing to bet that the toll lanes won't be able to recover operating costs, let alone the capital costs," he said. "They'll lose a lot of money."

Varaiya based his prediction on a 2007 study of a plan to convert a fourteen-mile section of Interstate 680 between Sunol and Milpitas into toll lanes, and on the experiences of other jurisdictions that have turned carpool lanes into toll lanes. They include Interstate 15 and State Route 91 in Southern California, and Interstate 394 in Minnesota. The only one of those three that has turned out to be profitable is SR 91, Varaiya said, and that's because it defines a carpool as containing at least three occupants. As a result, most of the cars in the toll lanes are toll-paying single-occupancy vehicles. "Basically, everybody pays," he explained. By contrast, most of the planned toll lanes in the Bay Area, including I-680, will only require two occupants per car to ride free, thereby limiting the toll revenues.

The toll lanes plan is being pushed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, a state agency that oversees all transportation funding in the Bay Area. The MTC views the plan as an essential way to raise money for transportation infrastructure and operating costs, especially when state funding is tight. Varaiya said he has invited MTC planners to come debate him on campus, but they have declined. MTC spokesman **Doug Kimsey** did not return two phone calls seeking a response to Varaiya's assertions. The plan is being carried in the California Legislature by Assemblyman **Alberto Torrico** of Newark. After being told of Varaiya's contentions, Torrico's spokesman **Jeff Barbose** said the assemblyman would call to discuss the issue, but he did not.

The MTC wants to operate the toll lanes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The plan is to charge single-occupancy vehicles a toll to use carpool lanes by employing the FasTrak technology now used on Bay Area bridges. The amount of the toll would be determined by how crowded the toll lane is. Paradoxically, the more crowded the lane, the higher the toll would be. The MTC hopes that such tolls would persuade single-occupancy cars to get out of the lane when demand is high, thereby improving traffic flow for carpoolers.

In 2007, Varaiya raised some eyebrows when he published a detailed report on the effectiveness of carpool lanes throughout California. After feeding reams of CalTrans data into computer models, he concluded that carpools lanes don't actually reduce traffic for anyone other than carpoolers. In fact, he argues, carpool lanes haven't even accomplished their main mission — getting more people to stop driving alone. Census data and other studies show that the percentage of people who carpool has remained flat for the past decade, he said.

The researcher came to his conclusions after studying data collected from sensors that CalTrans installs in freeway pavement. The sensors show how many cars pass through a given lane and how fast they are traveling at any given time. Using more than 86,000 data samples taken from 760 miles of carpool lanes during six months in 2005, Varaiya concluded that because carpool lanes are substantially underused in many areas, they actually make traffic far worse in the regular lanes than it otherwise would be. Meanwhile, the carpool lanes usually run slow for two other reasons. First, some motorists choose to drive well below the speed limit because they're uncomfortable driving past backed-up traffic. Second, single-occupant vehicles often lurch into the carpool lane for brief stretches to avoid bad traffic in the regular lanes.

So if the goal of carpool lanes is to increase the overall flow of traffic, Varaiya believes these factors make carpool lanes ineffective. And if the goal is to reduce the number of vehicles on the road, thereby easing traffic and cutting back on emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants, then carpools are a failure because their use has remained flat. The engineer believes most carpool lanes should be eliminated and that the best way to regulate heavy traffic is through the extensive use of metering lights. He points to the success of metering lights in managing traffic on the Bay Bridge.

Varaiya is not without detractors, however, and his research is not without controversy. His research conclusions so defied the conventional wisdom that one of his colleagues, UC Berkeley engineering professor Michael Cassidy, decided to videotape Bay Area carpool lanes and bottlenecks and then study the tapes closely. In a paper released last year, he concluded that carpool lanes were effective because they limit lane changing on congested freeways.

One of the main causes of heavy traffic is that too many cars change lanes too often, slowing everyone else down. With carpool lanes, fewer opportunities for cars to change lanes means improved traffic flow. "If there is less lane changing, you could get higher flows, but we didn't expect to find that," Cassidy said in an interview. "But when we did find that, we said, 'Oh, that makes sense.'" And what about toll lanes? Cassidy said he has not studied the issue, and declined to comment on it.

So is Varaiya right? Will toll lanes turn out to be a big waste of taxpayer money? Well, even Cassidy doesn't advocate expanding carpool lanes because he acknowledges that when they're significantly underutilized they slow down other traffic. Yet the MTC and Torrico want to nearly double the amount of carpool lanes in the Bay Area and then turn them into toll lanes.

Varaiya believes that motorists will revolt at the 24/7 toll lane plan. He thinks that few people will be willing to pay to ride carpool lanes during noncommute hours and on weekends. And that they'll get even angrier when the existence of the toll lane slows down traffic in the regular lanes during those hours. That's exactly what happened on Interstate 394 in Minnesota, he said, and it forced transit authorities to roll back the toll lanes to commute hours only. Once such lanes are only open for part of the day, he says that they don't bring in enough money to pay for themselves.

Clearly, Varaiya is raising some serious concerns that need to be addressed. The MTC and Torrico should slow down their toll lane plan and take a closer look. It would be a huge mistake to waste massive amounts of scarce transportation funds on what could end up being a money-losing 800-mile network of toll lanes.

However, at this point, it looks like the MTC plans to plow ahead. Varaiya believes the toll lanes are being pushed by road builders and traffic consultants, and that there's simply too much money to be made. The MTC estimates that it will spend $7.6 billion over the next 25 years to convert carpool lanes, build new toll lanes, and run the system. "It's a boondoggle," he said. "And it's totally irresponsible." ●

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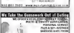

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Demetie Davenport monitors Koreatown for graffiti and illegal dumping. Keun Bae Yoo and Ben Schweng (above right) schmooze at Art Murmur

Al Thompson

NOT YOUR TYPICAL ETHNIC ENCLAVE

Welcome to Koreatown, which was the vision of one man, includes few Korean residents, and employs an African American "street ambassador." By Kathleen Richards

Keun Bae Yoo stands in front of a large splotchy painting resembling a Rorschach inkblot. It's the evening after New Year's Day during the monthly Art Murmur, when Oakland art galleries sell artwork open their doors to the public. Yoo, a Korean-American real estate investor dressed in a Polo pullover sweater, slacks and dress shoes, looks just a tad out of place among the twenty- and thirtysomething hipsters milling about the gallery Johansson Projects.

After a moment of quizzical inspection, he asks, "What is this?"

A young woman standing nearby, watching over the artwork, looks puzzled.

"Excuse me, what is it?" asks Yoo's associate Ben Schweng, trying to be a little less blunt. At 34, wearing a Cal sweatshirt, jeans and roughed up boots, Schweng looks slightly less conspicuous than Yoo.

"What is the material?" the woman asks, trying to clarify the question.

"No. What is the picture?" Yoo asks again in his heavily accented English.

"I dunno," she replies, unsure of how to respond. "It's supposed to be abstract. What do you think it is?"

"I think it's a lake," Yoo states, and then walks on.

The Korean American community and the art crowd may occupy the same Telegraph Avenue neighborhood — the same block, even — but they don't often interact. So when they do, it can be a bit awkward. But tonight, Yoo, at the suggestion of Schweng, is here to breach that boundary. Both are board members of the Koreatown Northgate Community Benefit District, a newly formed organization made up mostly of property owners whose goal it is to "promote and improve the area." They've come to Art Murmur to recruit folks to help plan their upcoming Koreatown street festival in the fall.

It's not the kind of outreach one might expect to see in an ethnic neighborhood. But then again, this isn't your typical enclave. Unlike other ethnic neighborhoods, Oakland's Koreatown isn't majority Korean — or even residentially Korean. It didn't arise organically. Nor was it the result of a wave of Korean immigrants settling in the same neighborhood with mom-and-pop businesses sprouting up to cater to them. This Koreatown was planned out — largely by one man.

About fourteen years ago, real estate developer Alex Hahn decided he wanted to create a Koreatown in Northern California. Today, after years of owning businesses, buying and selling property, and making money, Hahn is finally seeing his vision come to fruition. Last year, property owners of Telegraph Avenue — stretching from 20th to 35th streets and including about 150 Korean-owned businesses — agreed to increase their taxes to form the community benefit district. The district has allowed them to increase security and street cleaning. Earlier this month, they unveiled new banners to demarcate Koreatown, with the slogan "Oakland's Got Seoul." Besides the upcoming street festival, other plans include starting a farmers' market and attracting a Korean hotel.

Some believe the changes have helped improve a neighborhood that for years has been characterized by homelessness and crime. "From 1994 to 2000, it's a three-sixty — in a good way," said Alex Jones, the Arab-American manager of Telegraph Quality Market, who grew up in the area. "It was terrifying out here. I see a lot of improvement, cleaning. Got a lot more patrol since the taxes went up." Wayne Harris, the African American owner of Telegraph Cleaners, thinks Koreatown will be successful. "Hopefully, it'll be an increase in business and a decrease in crime and people who hang around," he said.

Yet, as with any new ethnic enclave — especially one in which the ethnic community is still very much in the minority — not everyone has been so receptive. Some businesses are upset with the name "Koreatown," and say the community benefit district doesn't embrace the neighborhood's diversity, which includes Muslims, African Americans, artists, homeless people, and industries such as social services, health care, and auto repair.

Led by Hahn, the board of the Koreatown Northgate Community Benefit District — whose members are about half Korean — insists they're trying to improve the community for everyone, but that the naming and branding of Koreatown is necessary to attract more Korean businesses, investors, and residents. Yet they also believe that in order to succeed — and to avoid the fractionalized atmosphere that erupted in Los Angeles' Koreatown during the riots in 1992 — they have to proactively embrace the whole community. Which is why, among other reasons, they've hired an African-American "street ambassador" to help spread the word — and keep the peace.

The story of how Oakland's Koreatown came to be starts with Hahn, who has the kind of immigrant success story that's almost cliché. He arrived in the United States in 1966 as a member of the South Korean Olympic fencing team with just $50 in his pocket. Now he lives in the affluent community of Blackhawk.

The tall, sprightly Korean American was ambitious and enterprising from the get-go. When his Olympic dream failed to materialize, Hahn started a wig business in Los Angeles. But that didn't work out either, so he relocated to the Bay Area and earned a degree in hotel restaurant management at City College of San Francisco.

In the decades following, he operated a string of businesses, including a restaurant and grocery market. "You name it, so many," said Hahn, whose first language was Korean and who still retains a thick accent. "Sometimes fails, sometimes big success." Most all of his businesses were in predominately black neighborhoods in Oakland, where

Continued on page 14

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Not Your Typical Ethnic Enclave

Continued from page 13

he learned to reconcile cultural differences with mutual respect and "street smarts."

Being the owner of a small business involved long hours and little pay. So about fifteen years ago, Hahn entered the fray of real estate development. "I realized I have to be involved in real estate because when I have a lease from the landlord, oh, I'm paying so much money. Looks like I'm working hard fourteen hours a day and landlord, they don't work. I work for him. Why don't I be landlord, that's the best business."

He started slowly buying up properties — a shopping center, the I. Magnin building — when prices were still reasonable in Oakland. "I have a vision, actually — real estate booming. Nobody believed it at that time, fourteen years ago."

His instincts were right — Hahn made quite a bit of money. But he wasn't satisfied just making a profit; he wanted to do something for the Korean-American community, too. "I liked to create Koreatown for the next generation," said Hahn. "Also, the Korean community trying to organize something ... just like Chinatown. We try to build up our own dreams."

He set his sights on Oakland as the perfect location for a Koreatown. Using LA's thriving Koreatown as a model, he decided San Jose was too big and San Francisco didn't have a large enough Korean population. Telegraph Avenue, he reasoned, was centrally located, close to transportation, and had ample parking.

First, he bought property on Telegraph at 27th Street, which was then the old Sears tire center. He developed the property, leasing it to the restaurant Sanwon BBQ House and a Korean pool hall, and then sold it. Next, his Koreatown needed a Korean grocery store, so he lured Kyopo Market from San Jose. The owner sold it to the current owner of what is now the hugely popular Koreana Plaza. Hahn also is responsible for attracting Nara Bank; the Korean newspaper *Hankook Ilbo*; and, with the help of investors from Korea, the KIA dealership on Broadway. In turn, those helped draw other Korean businesses and investors.

Keun Bae Yoo and his wife Suk Hee Yoo were two of them. The real estate investors lived in San Francisco for more than twenty years, but moved to Oakland after Hahn convinced them to do so. "Twelve years ago, Alex Hahn was keep talking to us about good idea to invest in East Bay, especially in Oakland area, thinking one day we need to have this Koreatown like Los Angeles," Suk Hee recalled, sitting at the kitchen table of one of their properties on Piedmont Avenue. "So one day, we decided to invest in Oakland area."

KOREATOWN NORTHGATE
Oakland's got Seoul

The couple sold all of their San Francisco property and bought a home and a few investment properties in Oakland, including the lot from Hahn that houses Sanwon BBQ House, which they also later sold. They currently own three properties in Koreatown, one in which their son lives, and are part owners of the building that houses Nakhum's Bakery and Smokey Blues Bar-Be-Que. Hahn, meanwhile, owns about six properties in Oakland, including two parcels in Koreatown.

But developing Koreatown into a bustling district hasn't been easy. It's taken a lot of hard work, and now the downturned economy and a weakened Korean won are stalling its progress.

On top of that, Oakland still has some con-

Ali Thanawalla

Koreatown Northgate Community Benefit District board members Keun Bae Yoo, Lenee Graff, and Suk Hee Yoo at the recent unveiling of the neighborhood's new banners.

Al Fonowato

Dornelle Davenport's outreach extends to Alex Jones (above), who says he supports the new Koreatown designation. Constance Ng (left), owner of 31 Plaza, says her customers are neighborhood kids, not Korean Americans.

per image issues to overcome. Many Korean Americans in the Bay Area have settled over the hills in the suburbs, and they consider Oakland a dangerous high-crime city with a poor school system. Getting Koreans to move here would entail changing that, Hahn says. The community benefit district has tried to help with the first problem — having hired extra security, with more on the way — but the second issue is in the hands of the city. "We have to improve that, then Koreans more coming in," he said. He also believes Koreatown needs a large Korean grocery store chain on par with the Chinese supermarket chain 99 Ranch Market to serve as the community's anchor.

Hahn is reassured by the formation of the community benefit district. Since Korean Americans own only 7 percent of the properties in the district, he considered that the biggest hurdle to his plans. However, non-Korean property owners were largely in favor of creating Koreatown.

But property owners aren't generally the people who actually inhabit an area. Some Korean business owners who were lured by the prospect of a Korean customer base are finding that their clientele is predominantly non-Korean. Constance Ng, who is of Japanese and Korean descent, opened 31 Plaza in January to appeal to international students and shoppers of Koreana Plaza, which sits just across the street from her. Yet five months later, Ng's swanky cafe/department store — which is modeled after shops in Asia — has mainly attracted neighborhood kids who use the space to do their homework. Now, Ng is thinking of remodeling her business plan and turning the space into something more resembling a community center. "I'm going to cater to them more — probably add more tables," she said. "Do something for the kids. I'd rather do that than make money."

And although the neighborhood is slowly changing, it's still frequented by homeless people, drug dealers, and other folks who might serve to detract potential investors. So someone has to be the eyes and ears on the ground in Koreatown.

That's where Dornelle Davenport comes in.

On a Thursday afternoon in April, Dornelle Davenport embarks on his daily walk through Koreatown. Dressed in a blue medical scrub shirt, jeans, and shiny blue sneakers, he doesn't look like he'd be a representative of Koreatown — and that's the point. Turns out, he's its official cheerleader.

Today, he's going door-to-door handing out fliers that advertise the upcoming banner-unveiling ceremony. His goal isn't just to spread the word, but also to make sure that the merchants feel included in Koreatown's development.

As he heads down 27th Street, where he works at the dialysis center RAI Peralta, toward West Grand, Davenport encounters the full range of elements that make up the neighborhood: a Korean restaurant, diner, adult video store, African-American hair salon, Vietnamese-run nail salon, Buddhist temple, Korean bookstore and eyeglass shop. It's a reminder of just how diverse Koreatown really is — and the challenges that lie ahead.

"Hey buddy, how are you today?" he calls out to Wayne Harris as he steps inside the storefront of his dry-cleaning business, Telegraph Cleaners. Davenport hands him a flier and explains how the mayor is invited and what TV media are scheduled to show up.

"If you wanna step out for 20-25 minutes, come on through," Davenport says.

"Okay, thanks for making me feel welcome," Harris responds with a smile as Davenport ducks out to continue his flyering.

Across the street, the dialysis technician veers down 23rd Street to Providence House, a supportive housing facility for people with HIV/AIDS. Although the facility is not technically within the Koreatown district, Davenport feels it's important to include it. "In order to have the businesses, you need to involve the community," he reasons. "These are your customers."

As Koreatown's official "street ambassador," Davenport takes his job very seriously. He isn't a property owner, but he works and lives there. Not only does he want to make the area a better place to live, but he believes that the Koreatown Northgate Community Benefit District can help make that happen. Of course, he has his own opinions, too.

"I feel as though I have a way with people," explained Davenport, sitting in a plush corner office in the dialysis center prior to his walk. "And people need some assurance, you know, that's what I'm here for. I interact very well with the public, and for a lot of the board members, they're really not from Oakland. They live outside of the area. So they're really not familiar. So part of my responsibility is to maintain the streets."

Davenport first learned of the Koreatown community benefit district from board member Kathy Bealle, who owns the building where he works. "One day, it was a lot of trash in her parking lot, stuff like that, and I said, 'Hey, you know, I'll pick that up for you.' So me and her became very close in a way where she began to trust me in doing things, not only because I work here but because my boss gave her a good report of who I am and what I've done to make things better for the dialysis center."

Bealle invited Davenport to one of the district's monthly board meetings. He continued to attend, and was very vocal in sharing his thoughts and ideas. A few months later, he was voted onto the board.

It soon became clear that Davenport had a unique perspective and position in the community that could benefit the board's mission. "My thing was that I could probably work with the people on the streets because I have a way with people and also because I was born and raised in the inner city, so I know how to relate with them, as opposed to other people that ... didn't live that type of life, may not know how to go in there. It's all about speaking." Plus, he added, "It's good with me being black, also it gives balance. If it was all Korean, you may not get feedback. I can relate to them. I try to keep the peace."

The board members seem to be counting on it. "What Dornelle does goes a long way to prevent what happened in Southern California, which is not what I want," said district board member Ben Schwang, referring to the LA riots, known to Korean Americans as *Sa-I-Gu*, or literally, 4/29.

As the board's street ambassador, Davenport is primarily paid to report graffiti and illegal dumping to the city. But he also interacts with neighborhood kids and other residents, including the homeless. He tries to prevent homeless from panhandling in front of businesses or loitering around bus stops.

But Davenport goes a step further. He'll give a homeless person a few dollars if he has money in his pocket, or tell them about the shelter on West Grand and San Pablo where they can get hot meals twice a week. Sometimes, he said, he walks with them to ensure that they get there.

His effort was evident the other day when, while passing out fliers on Telegraph, he ran into an older homeless man pushing a shopping cart. He told the man to meet him at the car wash down the street where he would pay him to wash his car. The man seemed reluctant at first, but Davenport

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A smart look at today's local news

92510
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Not Your Typical Ethnic Enclave

Continued from page 15

kept pushing the issue until he agreed.

"Because homeless people are homeless they're still people," said Davenport. "And my thing is, I treat everyone the same whether you homeless or whether you have a nice big home and a business over here. ... And so I try to interact with them, and I also try to let them know what we're trying to do within our community and that they are a part of the community."

Sometimes, however, Davenport's tactics can be a little too touchy-feely for the board. He said he once hired homeless people to pass out fliers for the board, and wanted to hire them to help clean up after their street festival this fall. But his good intentions didn't pass muster with the board.

"This is the down-and-dirty work that I do out here," he said, adding that some board members seem hesitant to interact with the community. "It'll get better once the board gets more comfortable."

As for Davenport's incentive? He doesn't seem as concerned with luring Korean businesses or residents as he is with making life better for the people who live here. Besides helping the homeless, he also wants to start a Boys and Girls Club or create a park for the neighborhood kids.

While he clearly enjoys the challenge of his job, Davenport also understands the limitations. Despite his best efforts, not everyone is thrilled with Koreatown, particularly the name and the banners. He chose to stop passing out fliers to a couple of businesses. "They don't like the whole word Koreatown," he said. "They said this was Northgate before it was anything and that's what they want it to be. They feel as though Koreans have come in here and bought most of the stores up along Telegraph, and they bought a lot of the property, and because a lot of the property has been bought with Koreans that they're pushing them out."

It's a complex issue because most of the merchants who are upset are African American, just like Davenport. He may be Koreatown's official cheerleader, but he understands the frustration of some of the merchants, too. "I can relate to it to a certain extent because I feel like maybe in the beginning it should have been done a little bit differently to get more people in the community involved before we just came up with a name," he continued. "But, unfortunately, Koreatown, they went through all the right channels to establish what we are to this very day. So I support it 110 percent."

Al Thanawala

Carl Jackson, the owner of Smokey Bbee Bar-Be-Que, believes his Korean landlords are trying to force him out of business, and that Korean gangs are responsible for the graffiti on his window (right)

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The tensions between proponents and opponents of Koreatown aren't black and white, or in this case, black and Korean. But the fact that the district is being branded as an ethnic community makes race an inherent factor. Some merchants and residents interviewed said they feel the Koreatown name and banners exclude the reality of Telegraph's diversity.

"To me it's discriminatory and not reflective of the community," said Aklilah Zainabu, owner of Business and Media Services, who noted that there are very few Korean-owned businesses between 27th and 35th streets, where her business is located. "The attitude of it too is kind of insulting. A flag — meaning our ownership, our agenda. What does that say for the rest of us that are here?"

Community activist and organizer Marilynn Mackey, who was born, raised, and still lives in the neighborhood, agrees that everyone should have a voice in shaping the area. She also takes issue with the banners being paid for by Oakland's redevelopment agency, and says there's a petition circulating to take them down. "The banners oughta come down," said Mackey. "And I believe the banners will come down when the citizens of Oakland find out that their redevelopment money is going to that."

Mama Buzz Cafe owner Jade Vrenatos said that even with the community benefit district doing outreach, she feels the naming of the district as Koreatown unfortunately alienates people. "If you want to build community, you have to organize people from the grass roots," she said. (She's been recruited to become a district board member because they have one spot reserved for a non-property-owning business owner, but she's not so sure she wants to join.) She also added that the district hasn't greatly improved things. "There's still crime, a lot of crime, and crackheads. There's all kinds of stuff that happens all the time." Increased police presence, she said, "doesn't stop anything from happening."

Resident Tan Matthews, who identified herself as part Native American, part Asian, and part white, said she feels that the board is "not abiding by the wishes of the community." The street sweeping and graffiti abatement are programs that the city already provides, she argues, and police and fire services are nearby. "We don't really need duplication of services," she said.

Matthews also wonders whether the community benefit district is exceeding its limitations as a nonprofit entity. "They're supposed to help; they're not supposed to take over," she said. "It's not a convenient excuse to start monopolizing."

So what about other ethnic neighborhoods in Oakland? Few people mentioned having concerns with the mostly Latino Fruitvale area or Chinatown, citing their larger and more historical roots. Koreans aren't numerous enough yet, or perhaps the larger community is still adjusting to their more-recent immigration.

"They should humble themselves," said Matthews. "This is not Seoul, Korea. This is Oakland Northgate."

The most vociferous Koreatown critic is Carl Jackson, owner of Smokey Blues Bar-Be-Que, next to Neldam's Bakery. He's not just against naming the area Koreatown, but he also accuses his Korean landlords of trying to run him out of business.

"What I am upset about is how this can be named Koreatown," said Jackson on a blisteringly hot afternoon. "It's just not fair. They're not good landlords. They're very, very arrogant."

Jackson says he has sent letters asking his landlords to fix his lights and his torn awning, but that nothing has been done about it, and it's repelling his customers. He says it's part of an effort to force him out. "They don't believe in leasing to minorities," he said. "If you're not Korean, they don't bother with you. It's a very racist situation."

He also says Korean gangs put a note on his door, which read "get out, this is Koreatown," and that they etched graffiti into his window using acid, so he can't remove it. He alleges that his Korean landlord came and threatened him. "I'm not sure if they wanted the property back or to break the lease," he said. "They killed my night business."

His landlords, however, vehemently deny Jackson's accusations. "He is lying, actually," said Suk Hee Yoo, who added that her husband Kenn Bae went to introduce himself when they first bought the building along with three other owners, but that Jackson accused him of threatening him. The couple says that the light was fixed and that they tried replacing his front window three times, but each time Jackson failed to show up. Now, they say, he won't talk to them without pointing them to his lawyer.

"Because we use 'Koreatown,' people think they are being isolated," Yoo said. "This is not true, you see. What kind of ethnic group is willing to invest in that area? Who's willing to improve the area? ... That's why I'm kind of upset when they say, 'Why you using Koreatown?' Then use your name then. Come here and improve it, put the effort like we did. Without putting their effort, why they are complaining about it?"

Such sentiments are nothing new to Alex Hahn, who operated businesses in majority African-American neighborhoods for years. "We have to understand, if you're in a black community, you get in there, they think you invade their territory," he said, adding that the situation is the same no matter what race the majority community is.

That's why he says it's important that the Korean businesses include everyone and be sensitive to their concerns. "I think we owe them because we make money from their community," he added. "We have to give them opportunity." When he operated Acorn Market in West Oakland, Hahn said the majority of workers he hired were from the neighborhood. When young people came and vandalized his store during the Rodney King riots, he chose not to call the police because he said it would have made the situation worse.

Whether business owners and residents like it or not, Koreatown doesn't appear to be going away. In fact, it's growing. It has the support of the city, the majority of property owners, and has the added resource of investors in Korea.

Residents, board member Ben Schweng said, have always been invited to add their input. "None of this went on beyond closed doors," he said. "The city council has known about this — they approved our name."

That might not please everyone, but Schweng believes it will ultimately benefit them. "Democracy doesn't mean that you always get what you want," he said, adding that there have been disagreements among board members, too. "We want to be judged on what we're doing for the neighborhood, which is a lot, I think." ●

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ARTS & CULTURE

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PIMPING EAST 14TH ... WITH RESERVATIONS

Don Reed's one-man-show explores two sides of 1970s East Oakland

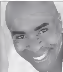
By Rachel Swan

Don Reed's father had many ways of endearing himself to people. He would draw seven-foot cartoons of Popeye in crayon all over his kids' bedroom walls. When the TV broke he made a new one out of a cardboard box and drew scenes on paper towels. He made Christmas trees out of blue string. He played congas at the UC Berkeley campus on Sunday, with a drumbeat that sounded louder than everyone else's. He had Peter Pan syndrome, a ribald sense of humor and flashy clothes. He pulled practical jokes that could take the edge off a bad situation. He didn't know how to read, but was sly enough to keep it from people. Not to mention that he was a pimp.

Such is the set-up for Reed's new one-man show, *East 14th: True Tales of a Reluctant Player*, which opens Friday, May 8 at the Marsh Theatre in San Francisco. To say Reed had a strange childhood would be a gross understatement. For the first eleven years of his life, he grew up in a respectable East Oakland neighborhood with a mother who worked at Kaiser and a father who played congas in jazz bands while working blue-collar jobs with Granny Goose potato chips and General Cable — well, when he went to work. Everything changed when his parents divorced in 1972. Reed's mother married a successful car dealer who indoctrinated the whole family in the ways of the Jehovah's Witnesses. His father moved to the other side of town and started hustling. Reed and his siblings oscillated between two worlds.

East 14th Street — now called International Boulevard — has always been an iconic landmark in East Oakland, not only because it's the main thoroughfare, but also because it's one of the main places to catch pimps and prostitutes on the day-to-day. For Reed it served as the dividing line between a cloistered middle-class home, and a hedonist underworld. His mother and stepfather lived in a tidy house on East 14th Street and Bridge Avenue, which felt at times like a prison to Reed. Under his stepfather's regime, Reed was forced to finish homework on Friday afternoons so he could spend the weekends knocking on doors in the neighborhood and trying to proselytize people. He was given a lengthy reading list that included *Watchtower*, *Awake*, the green book, the yellow book, and the little blue book. He had to attend church every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. He was disciplined with thin leather belts. "Birthdays, Christmas, all the major holidays were suddenly vacuumed out of our lives," said Reed, who recalled leaving the house on Christmas morning with the same beater bike he'd rode the year before, trying to defend it. Reed acquired nervous tics like the incessant eye-winking that earned him the nickname "Blinky." Six days a week, his life ossified into something cold and hard.

Then on Sundays, Reed took the bus all the way down to the other end of East 14th Street to visit his father, who lived in various marginal neighborhoods on the south side. Reed's father hung out with "every over-colorful person you could possibly imagine," the playwright recalled — older drifters, fellow pimps, prostitutes, daughters of prostitutes, layabouts and men who would constantly school teenage Reed in the whys and wherefores of hustling. For all his character flaws, the elder Reed had a way of accepting people that made him seem more progressive than other folk. He took in a maligned gay stepson named Tony and housed another son, Darrell, who was a small-time criminal and barrio lothario. And he created an environment that always felt warm and welcoming, said Reed, who only half understood how his father made money. He said the Sunday bus rides to his father's house felt liberating. "You don't have to think about anything except 'I'm in a cage, I'm out today and she looks kinda hot.'"


Don Reed

Event Details:
East 14th: True Tales of a Reluctant Player runs through June 14 at San Francisco's Marsh Theatre (1062 Valencia St.) Fri. 8 p.m. Sat. 8:30 p.m. Sun. 3 p.m. $20-$35 TheMarsh.org

Reed grew up a quiet, fly-on-the-wall kid who taught himself to juggle and blind dancing to the Jackson 5 with his sister. He spent a lot of time watching other people and internalizing their speech patterns. By the time he entered high school, Reed could do spot-on imitations of all the strange characters in his life: His cruel stepfather; his compliant mother; the pimps in his father's cabal; a monthly best friend with a pronounced lisp; and all the people he encountered at church. He learned how people reveal themselves in small ways — that his stepfather's obsession with arranging books by size was an indication of OCD, for example, and that his father's decadent lifestyle was really a different kind of morality rather than a form of moral lassitude. When Reed's stepfather enjoined him to deliver sermons to the church congregation, Reed figured out how to flip the script and manhandle his audience.

Thus a dysfunctional childhood paved the way for Reed's career in stand-up comedy and theater. Though he never became a hustler like his father, he did learn the alchemy of pimping — i.e., how to exploit a situation and make it go your way. It began with the speeches at church, which Reed rendered into an art form. He illustrated all his sermons with elaborate anecdotes and character impersonations, which kept his audience entranced. He used the gift of gab to seduce women. At age fifteen he left the church for good, moved in with his father, and took what he needed from the player lifestyle. "The summer after eleventh grade I moved in with my father. I came back to school in the fall of '76 with burgundy boots, bellbottom pants, and my hair permed in a 'Lord Jesus cut,'" Reed said. He would eventually use that combination of loquacity and personal flair to slay the debate team at Chabot College, and land a partial scholarship to UCLA. His stand-up comedy career — alongside icons like Robert Townsend and Bill Cosby — owes a lot to both his degenerate father and anal-retentive stepfather.

Reed's life story has so much intrigue on its face that there's almost no way it could not be interesting and dramatic onstage. It's also chock-full of moral messages, many gleaned from a low-class character with a heart of gold. Reed wants to disabuse audience members of the notion that all pimps are alike. Nonetheless, he doesn't necessarily want to glamorize the pimp lifestyle. A reluctant player after all, Reed takes care to show the downsides of his father's dissolute lifestyle. He said he wrote the play in part to memorialize all the folks who represented a particular time and place, not only in his childhood, but in 1970s East Oakland: The prostitute girlfriend Vernell who tried to stab Reed for not taking her to the prom; the slow-witted Troutmouth who loved dispensing advice; the women who would woo him with their fast talk and expensive clothing, if not their feminine wiles. "I keep looking on Facebook and trying to find all these people," Reed said. "Almost certainly they're gone."

Unfortunately, that point might be lost on some members of his audience. Reed said that a lot of pimps attend his play and come up to congratulate him afterward. One even brought a couple of his girls to a show in Los Angeles. "The girls were standing over at the bar. ... He came over and he went, 'I want you to meet somebody.' He pointed, and one came over, introduced herself and went back. Then he pointed, and the other came over, introduced herself and went back. ... Kinda weird, you know?" ●

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EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

Courtesy East Bay Bicycle Coalition

Oakland city councilwomen Pat Kernighan and Jean Quan, and fellow riders.

A New Set of Wheels

East Bay Bicycle Coalition stretches Bike to Work Day into a whole month of bicycle-themed activities.

There was a time when biking represented an alternate vision of civil society. It was the defining activity of several loosely agglomerated subcultures: Critical Mass activists, zero-fat health nuts, consumers of Clif Bars, doctrinaire environmentalists, collectors of "gear," people who thought they looked good walking around town in Spandex and a helmet. But recently, it's become more of a mainstream trend, according to East Bay Bicycle Coalition chair Dave Campbell. More and more people are using bikes as an everyday form of transportation — not just to commute to jobs, but to shop for groceries or go out to dinner. BART stations are rolling out a new kind of electronic bike locker that comes with a smart card so patrons can open them on demand. Most AC Transit buses have bike racks. Forty-six-year-old Campbell said he started using a bike regularly after moving to the Bay Area in 1996. In 2003, he sold his car and never bought a new one. He's extremely happy with his cardio-intensive, less carbon-emitting lifestyle.

This May, the East Bay Bicycle Coalition will try to create a new kind of urban metropolis, in which bicycles — not cars — jam the city streets. Actually, the idea isn't new. The League of American Bicyclists proclaimed May National Bike Month fifty years ago. Oakland had its first Bike to Work Day back in 1993, and the rest of the Bay Area followed suit in 1994. With increased funding in recent years (from a $10,000 budget in 2006 to a $100,000 budget this year), Bay Area bike enthusiasts and city agencies managed to stretch Bike to Work Day into an entire month of bicycle-themed activities. This year, the East Bay Bicycle Coalition is sponsoring a Team Bike Challenge, in which teams of two to five cyclists will compete to see who can ride their bikes the most. (The point is to get newbies biking to work or school, so each team is required to have one novice.) The coalition will also offer a spate of free bike clinics (including one at the Berkeley Farmers' Market, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 9) that will teach everything from how to change a flat to grocery shopping on a bike.

The big highlight is May 14's **Bike to Work Day**, during which cyclists will receive free goody bags at energy stations throughout the Bay Area. Campbell says the event has grown exponentially in the last few years. "Last year it grew 25 percent on average throughout East Bay," he said. "At some energizer stations we used to only see forty to fifty cyclists go by in morning, and now we're seeing 150." That augurs well for a leaner, greener Bay Area. EBBC.org

— *Rachel Swan*

ATTRACTIONS

The Butterfly Garden Is Open Join Jan Southworth to wander the peaceful pathways, watch hummingbirds and butterflies, and learn about butterfly gardening. Second Saturday of every month, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Coyote Hills Regional Park, 8000 Patterson Ranch Rd., Fremont, 510-795-9385. EBParks.org.

Garden Days at the EnviroGarden Hands-on activities and demonstrations. Learn about air quality, gardening, composting, solar energy, and more. Second and Fourth Saturday of every month, 12-4 p.m. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-7373, ChabotSpace.org.

Oakland Outdoor Marketplace Featuring handmade jewelry, sculptures, ceramics, botanical photography, dolls, glass, clothing, floral arrangements, greeting cards, and more. Info: 510-238-4911. Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Frank Ogawa Plaza, at 14th and Broadway sts., Oakland.

Redwood Valley Railway Twelve-minute scenic journey by steam train through the redwoods of Tilden Regional Park. Info: 510-548-6100. Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. $2 per ticket, or 5 tickets for $8. Tilden Regional Park, corner of Wildcat Canyon Rd. and Grizzly Peak Blvd., Berkeley. 510-525-2233.

Sunday Nature Adventures Learn about snakes, butterflies, insects, or shellmounds, and their importance to the world we live in during this weekly program. This program is great for scouts and family groups. Registration required. Sundays, 2-3 p.m. Free. Coyote Hills Regional Park, 8000 Patterson Ranch Rd., Fremont, 510-795-9385. EBParks.org.

University of California Botanical Garden See plants you won't find anywhere else — more than 12,000 varieties, in fact. Free docent tours Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 1:30 p.m., open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free admission on Thursdays. Daily. UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley, 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.berkeley.edu.

FAIRS, FESTIVALS & FUND-RAISERS

[illegible] Annual Pagan [illegible] With an interfaith ritual, community altars, a green pavilion, a Temple of Change, Druid storytelling, an authors' circle, a children's craft area, vendors, resources from local organizations, and prizes for best float and best costume. Keeper of the Light is Rainbow Bird Fire; [illegible] are Shay Black and Christina Sainer. Call 510-872-1189 to volunteer. Sat., May 9, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Free. Civic Center Park, Center St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley.

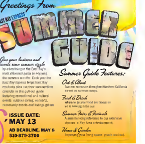
Benefit for [illegible] Dance performance with music by [illegible], spoken word by Marcia Ramsey, a silent auction, wine, and hors d'oeuvres. Call 510-594-5828 for tickets or to RSVP. Sat., May 9, 5:30 p.m. $20-$100. Shawl-Anderson Dance Center, 2704 Alcatraz Ave., Berkeley, 510-654-5921, www.shawl-anderson.org.

Benefit for the SalmonAID Festival Fishermen, environmentalists, chefs, and [illegible] of SalmonAID present their annual fundraiser with live music, dancing, information about salmon, plus a live auction. Proceeds go toward producing 3rd SalmonAID Festival in June. Thu., May 7, 7:30 p.m. $25. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2568, LaPena.org.

Domingo de Madre Mother's Day celebration and Puerto Rican music and dance by members of Los Rumberos de la Bahía. Sun., May 10, 3-5:30 p.m. Free. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2568, LaPena.org.

First Wednesday Street Party Cinco de Mayo Celebration With food vendors, artisans and featured band La Ventana. Wed., May 6, 6-9 p.m., free. Downtown Pleasanton, Main St., Pleasanton, 925-484-2199.

NewWorld Street Faire With costumes, an international dance, resources from nonprofit organizations, exotic food corner, an ambient alley with downtempo music, a Middle Eastern Casbah Tent, a kids' alley, a great [illegible] by dance world, [illegible] Bass Tent, and four stages of dance music. For info, visit NewWorld.org. Sat., May 16, 12-7 p.m. $10 to [illegible]



Greetings From

EAST BAY EXPRESS SUMMER GUIDE

Give your business and events some summer style by advertising in the East Bay's most informed guide to enjoying the summer months. Each year the *East Bay Express* helps East Bay residents plan out their summertime calendar in this pull-out guide featuring recreational and cultural events, outdoor dining, concerts, community events and listings galore.

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PICKS

African Presence in Mexico Community Opening

Centuries of [illegible] appropriation and cultural exchange lie behind Oakland Museum of California's new exhibit **"The African Presence in México: From Yanga to the Present,"** which looks at African contributions to Mexican culture in music, language, dance, and cuisine. Though few people know the history of African slaves who were brought in by way of the Middle Passage and forced to labor on plantations and in the silver industry, most will recognize the Afro-Latino roots in son music, folk dances, and even the pop song "La Bamba." On Saturday, May 9, **Oakland Museum of California** (1000 Oak St.) will unveil this fascinating exhibition (courtesy of the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago) with music and dance performances by Diamano Coura and Camindo de Flores, including a unique interpretation of the Mexican folk tale "The Tree and the Donkey Who Wanted to Sing." Exhibit cocurator Cesáreo Moreno will present a slide show and lecture spanning four centuries of history. Noon-4 p.m., $5-$8. MuseumCa.org — *Rachel Swan*

Benefit for Paufve Dance

Oakland choreographer Randee Paufve started dancing as an anthropology major in college, and wound up studying a range of international styles, all with a modern dance foundation. She garnered critical acclaim three years ago for "The Big Squeeze," a project that required audience members to migrate from room to room at **Shawl-Anderson Dance Center** (2704 Alcatraz Ave., Berkeley) and watch seven short pieces that all dealt with concepts of home and relationships. (It worked well because *Shawl-Anderson* is housed in an old Berkeley Victorian, and it really has the feel of a home.) This Saturday, May 9, Shawl-Anderson will host a **benefit** for Paufve's eponymous dance company, with music by Kala Paulikin, spoken word by Marcus Fleming, a silent auction, wine, hors d'oeuvres, and performances of original choreography. 5:30 p.m., $50-$100. For tickets or to RSVP: 510-654-5921. — *R.S.*

Cal Women's Tennis

The **Golden Bear women's tennis team** is having a season to remember. The netters are sending five of their stars to the NCAA individual tournament this spring, a school record. In addition, two of the Golden Bears will be teamed up as one of only 32 doubles teams invited to the Team tournament held later this month. But why settle for just individual glory when there's one more chance to see the whole team in action? On Friday, May 8 (11 a.m.), and Saturday, May 9 (noon), at the **Hellman Tennis Center** (Fulton and Kittredge sts., Berkeley), the first two rounds of the NCAA tournament will take place. The Golden Bears host three other schools for the right to claim not just personal honors but recognition as one of the top teams in the country. Free. CalBears.com — *Kibby Kleiman*

Oakland Museum of California

South Berkeley Youth Arts Summit

Having a plethora of arts programs in Berkeley has clearly paid off. For proof, one need only glance at the list of homegrown superstars (e.g., Jamila Thomas, Ambrose Akinmusire, Amel Sehrig) who launched their careers in a high-school drama club, jazz band, or drawing class. More importantly, Berkeley has produced a new generation of dilettantes who are conversant not only in hip-hop, but in all the traditions that came before. On Wednesday, May 13, at La Peña Cultural Center (3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley), Berkeley will celebrate its various incubators with the **South Berkeley Youth Arts Summit**, which will feature the Longfellow Middle School Jazz Band, Ballet Folklórico, hip-hop and modern dance choreography by Dance Emissions, the Afro-Peruvian Youth Ensemble, and La Peña's Kids Bomba Workshop. 7 p.m., $8, $5 for students. LaPena.org — *R.S.*

E&A

[illegible], Howard St., at 3rd St., San Francisco

Mother's Day Peace Fair With music, refreshments, and uplifting speakers. Sun., May 10, 2-5 p.m., $5. Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St. (at Bonita St.), Berkeley. 510-841-4824. [illegible]

Neurivas Gathering of Bay Area [illegible] benefit. Berkeley [illegible] and [illegible] benefit. Sat., May 9, 8 p.m., $10-$15. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

Pixar Pre-Release Gala Benefit Screening of *Up* Special screening of the new Pixar film from Disney-Pixar to benefit the Emery Ed Fund. Thu., May 28, 6 p.m., $[illegible]. Pixar Animation Studios, 1200 Park Ave., Emeryville. 510-752-3000. Pixar.com.

Young People's Symphony Orchestra Spring Auction and Silent Auction Fund-raiser concert [illegible] selections from *Romeo and Juliet Suites 1 and 3* by Prokofiev, *Musica Mobile* for [illegible] by *Romeo and Sarasate* (Spanish) by [illegible] Berkeley guest cellist [illegible]. Sat., May 9, 8:30 p.m., $12-$15. First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. 510-848-3696.

KIDS

Action Club [illegible] for teens, [illegible] and fourth Saturday of every month, 5-6:30 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library, Rockridge Branch, 5366 College Ave., Oakland. 510-597-5017. OaklandLibrary.org.

Art Explorer for Families with preschoolers Ages 4-10 can learn to draw, work with clay, make simple prints, and enjoy an artistic environment in a [illegible] setting. Maximum five students per class. Call to reserve. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, $8. NIAD Art Center, 551 23rd St., Richmond. 510-620-0290. NIADart.org.

Bat Seat [illegible] Officers from the Berkeley Police Department will [illegible] a car seat safety [illegible] on the 5th floor of the Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way. [illegible]. Sat., May 9, 10 a.m.-noon; Sun., July 19, 10 a.m.-noon; Sat., Sept. 26, 10 a.m.-noon; free. Edward Children's Museum, 2065 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-647-1111.

Children's Fairyland Performing Activities Featuring arts and crafts, puppet shows, Aesop's theater shows, the [illegible] of the day and more. Saturdays, 11 a.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m., $8. Children's Fairyland, 699 Bellevue Ave. (at Lake Merritt), Oakland. 510-452-2259. Fairyland.org.

Dance My Dance A creativity workshop for kids grades 2-12. Please preregister. [illegible] Fridays, 4:15-6 p.m., $15/session or $50/four. Oakland Frank Bette Center for the Arts, 1601 Paru St., Alameda. 510-523-6957. FrankBetteCenter.org.

Kinderly Music Singing, movement, and instruments for young families. Fridays, 10:30 a.m., free. Crossroads Community Center & Coffeehouse, 1203 High St., Alameda. 510-864-8500. CrossroadsCoffee.org.

Kids Go Green [illegible] in the [illegible] forest surrounding Chabot Space & Science Center, plus indoor table [illegible] the museum's ecosystem. Sat., May 9, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., $10.95-$14.95. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

Mother's Day in Special Space & Science Center Celebrate by [illegible] with mom in front of a giant telescope. Sun., May 10, 11 a.m., free. Chabot Space & Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-336-7373. ChabotSpace.org.

Oakland Mic Youth Speaks presents a [illegible] under-21 open mic [illegible] by emcee Clay and Kay [illegible] and [illegible] from 7-11 p.m. [illegible] Friday of every month, 7 p.m., free. 415-255-9035. YouthSpeaks.org. Oakland Art Gallery, 199 Kahn's Alley (at Frank Ogawa Plaza), Oakland. 510-637-0395. OaklandArtGallery.org.

Bharata Dance for Kids Beginning classes in Indian classical dance. Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. [illegible] Kala Mandir College of Bharata Classical Arts, 1834 Delaware St., Berkeley. 510-213-2441. [illegible].org.

Project Graduate 2009 Presentation by 5-8 youth works created by students from programs in East Bay [illegible] 5-11 youth shorts and a *Roman* workshop of the three-nominated feature documentary *Double the Wilder*. All event Museum, [illegible] the youth programs to non-profit organization Alternatives in Action. Thu., May 14, 6 p.m., $5-$100. Oakland Roman & Cinema, 2237 [illegible] Ave., Oakland. (510) 703-3454.

Rockridge Mojo Annual group. For info call Suzy Moorehead at 510-597-5011 or e-mail [illegible]@oaklandlibrary.org. Second and [illegible] of every month, 5-6:30 p.m. Continues through Sept. 1, free. Oakland Public Library, Rockridge Branch, 5366 College Ave., Oakland. 510-597-5017. OaklandLibrary.org.

LGBT

Dress-Up Wednesdays A [illegible] gathering where transgender girls, cross-dressers, and first-timers are welcome. Enjoy [illegible] and a large [illegible] of clothing for the woman in you. [illegible] up, make friends, take photos, and get fashion tips. Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., $35. [illegible] 45879 [illegible] Springs Blvd., #7, Fremont. 510-656-4798. [illegible].com.

Fast Day Front Oakland Join the [illegible] for conversation, [illegible] and [illegible] Oakland [illegible] to a [illegible]. Visit the Web site for weekly locations. Saturdays, 11 a.m., free. [illegible]. Berkeley Mamma, 201 University Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-4140.

LGBT Weight Watchers Oakland [illegible] weightwatchers.com for more info. Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Continues through Dec. 29. $12-$13. Oakland Veterans Hall, 1870 Chestnut St. (upstairs), Berkeley.

Transitions Gay Straight Alliance Opportunity for LGBT youth ages 13-17 to [illegible]. Second and fourth Tuesday of every month, 5-6 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library, 125 14th St. (Oakland History Room), Oakland. 510-238-3222. OaklandLibrary.org.

Women Computers Club [illegible] Tyme Conspiracy Cafe, [illegible] and Civil Gab. Fridays, 9 p.m. Continues through Sept. 4, $5. White Horse Inn, 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-652-3820. WhiteHorseBar.com.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Built to Last Oakland '20s Oakland Party With live music by What's Up Big Band, a [illegible]. Pots of [illegible], silent auction and 52-card raffle [illegible] week's [illegible] at [illegible]. For info, call 510-357-0295 ex. 114. Thu., May 2, 5:30-9 p.m., $45-$60. Alta Mira Clubhouse, 561 Lafayette Ave., San Leandro.

Learning Dances the [illegible] Oakland [illegible] Jack London Street Dance Studio presents dance lessons in a different style each week, ranging from rumba to salsa to waltz. For info, call 510-645-0093 ex. 225. Fridays, 6:30-8:15 p.m. Continues through July 3, free. Jack London Square, 11 Washington St. (foot of Broadway), Oakland. 510-663-0770. JackLondonSquare.com.

Lake Merritt Rotary Club Social/benefit organization dedicated to the preservation of Lake Merritt. For info, visit LMRC.org. Thu., May 14, 6-8:30 p.m., $10. Lake Merritt, 667 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-414-2489.

Oakland Coffee Club Monthly Business Event [illegible] guest speakers, live music, [illegible] coffee, and [illegible] every Saturday of every month, 10 a.m.-noon, free. 510-238-3011. Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. 510-654-0123.

Style with Grace A Gaylord Second Show with wine, [illegible] and more. First Thursday of every month, 5-8 p.m. 415-925-501-0013. [illegible].net. [illegible] Boutique, 422 Ansilton Ave. [illegible] 925-597-0813. [illegible].com.

Toastmasters Oakland of Diablo Valley Bi-monthly meeting, open to all members and visitors. For more info, call 925-736-5272 or visit [illegible].com. First Thursday of every month, 6:30 p.m. The Outpost Casino, 2850 San Ramon Valley Rd., San Ramon. 925-837-1143.

What Do Men and Women Want? Drop-in Topical Discussion Group Wednesdays, 1:30-9:30 p.m. Continues through June 3, $10. Hutchins Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. 510-526-3805.

SPORTS & OUTDOORS-PARTICIPATORY

Bike to Work Day to the Farmers' Market With bike valets for everything from changing a flat tire to greasing your chain. Sat., May 9, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., free. Berkeley Farmers' Market, Allston Way (between Milvia St. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley. 510-548-3333. www.[illegible].org.

Second HP-Sponsor Trail Hike Five Bird loop led by California native seeds, [illegible] flowers of the East Bay California Native Plant Society. Meet at the [illegible] Valley Staging Area. For info, visit EBNCPS.org. Sun., May 10, 11 a.m., free. Second Park, 5263 Alhambra Valley Rd., Martinez. 925-[illegible]-5020.

Cycling: Improving Your Performance for Fun, Fitness, or Competition Workshop and lecture by Curtis Crowdes. Wed., May 13, 7 p.m., free. REI Berkeley, 1338 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-4140. REI.com.

Livermore's Biggest Loser Group benefit training, nutrition guidance, and weekly progress tracking. For more information or to register, visit LARPD.dst.ca.us or call 925-373-5700. Through July 4, $139-$159. Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore. 925-373-5600.

Midnight Mystery Mosaic Second and Fourth Saturday of every month, 11:40 p.m., free. OaklandWalk.com. Arbor Park, MacArthur Blvd., Oakland.

Pax Oakland Bike Tour Weekly Bike Ride Leisurely 15-25-mile ride up Tunnel Road and through the Berkeley Hills. Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free. Nomad Cafe, 6500 Shattuck Ave., Oakland. 510-595-5344. Nomad[illegible].net.

Second Shaolin Kung Fu and Qi Gong Classes Students learn the elements to [illegible] or boxing forms that involve the hands, eyes, body and feet. Through Feb. 1, 2010. Shaolin Luo Han Temple, 2136 Berkeley Wy., Berkeley.

SPORTS-SPECTATOR

Bay Area Derby Girls Bout "Best of the West" Roller derby bout with Bay Area's B.A.D. Girls Spring, Seattle's Rat City Rollergirls. Sat., May 9, 8 p.m., $11-$20. Fort Mason, Marina Blvd. and Buchanan St., San Francisco. 415-345-7575. FortMason.org.

Oakland A's vs. Texas Rangers Wed., May 6, 7:05 p.m., $5-$45. McAfee Coliseum, 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland. 510-863-2121. [illegible].com. 510-763-8441. OaklandAthletics.mlb.com

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MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

Benjamin Crowden's "Some People I Don't Know"

Omnium-Gatherum

Twenty-one artists triumph over diversity at Alphonse Berber

Lean times or not, new galleries are still opening. Berkeley's new **Alphonse Berber Gallery** features, in its second show, a 21-artist extravaganza of more than one hundred artworks in drawing, painting, photography, mixed media, sculpture, video, installation, jewelry, and fashion. With that diverse smorgasbord, the works are understandably arranged somewhat haphazardly among the three galleries, so it can be a bit confusing. Nonetheless, the casual visitor will find plenty to peruse, only a fraction of which can be discussed here.

Gregory Euclide crafts diorama-like reliefs that combine drawing and sculpted paper elements to create poetic 3D evocations of landscape — world and memory preserved like flowers under glass ("In What the Mist Had Bloomed"). David Chapman Lindsay deconstructs the stretched canvas. "4 Cardinal Directions" is a gilt-framed oil portrait of a young girl seemingly jammed perpendicularly halfway into the wall; the male subject of "Fresnel Portrait" is painted on curved wedges of wood and canvas that coalesce into a rough segmented drum. **Ryoko Tajiri**'s oil paintings derive from the Bay Area figurative tradition, though she employs a more subdued palette than we generally associate with that school; her pensive women are absorbed into the painterly, almost abstract compositions ("Woman at White Table," "Day Dream," "Girl in Back Light"). **Steve Kim** may work from photographs, but he edits and reinterprets them to create obscure and sometimes humorous narratives ("Kitsune Nela Diorama," "Dolly and Bart," "Octobaby"). **Justin Margitich** makes etchings depicting the activities of the Friends of the Urban Forest (a real tree-planting nonprofit based in San Francisco) like alfresco assemblies of benign druids ("The Friends of the Urban Forest Have a Meeting," "The Friends of the Urban Forest Enjoy Their New Lake," "The Friends of the Urban Forest Meet Again"). The absurdist universe of **Timothy Kadish**'s paintings is exemplified by the inventory of motifs in "Three Waldos, Four Parachute Men, Seven Mushrooms, Eight Tanks, and Four Turtle Doves." **Mitsuko**'s comically grotesque ceramic portrait busts suggest rioting snowmen studded with bits of crockery. Lastly, **Benjamin Crowden** makes ingenious kinetic sculptures: In "Eating My Cake and Having It Too" a silicone tongue controlled by a lever licks a rotating lollipop; in "Some People I Don't Know," abstracted human figures engage in ritualized crank-powered dances — like the planetary systems in gear-driven Victorian orreries. *You, Me and Everyone We Know* runs through June 6 at Alphonse Berber Gallery (2546 Bancroft Way, Berkeley). AlphonseBerber.com or 510-649-9492.

— *DeWitt Cheng*

ART GALLERIES

ABC® Warehouse Space. Challenge of Champions: [illegible] an exhibit commenting on [illegible]. Through Dec. 28. 1125 [illegible], Emeryville. [illegible]

Addison Street Windows Gallery. Portraits from Near and Far: With collage paintings by Lisa Cabrera and Susan Ichimura. Reception Fri., April 17, 6-8 p.m. Through May 10. 2018 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-981-1546.

Alphonse Berber Gallery. You, Me, and Everyone We Know: Nineteen artists present figure paintings, sculpture, lithographs, photography, apparel, [illegible] jewelry, etchings, [illegible] and more. Through June 6. 2546 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 510-649-9492. AlphonseBerber.com.

Bedford Gallery. Floating in Wax: [illegible] curated by [illegible] Goldberg. Through June 21. **Working in Wax:** Juried exhibition with waxed figures. Through June 21. 1601 Civic Dr. (Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts), Walnut Creek. 925-295-1417. BedfordGallery.org.

Berkeley Art Center. Lyric Fresco Paintings by Lawrence Ferlinghetti: Through May 10. **Lyric Poems/Paintings by Lawrence Ferlinghetti:** Through May 10. 1275 Walnut St. (in Live Oak Park), Berkeley. 510-644-6893. BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

Berkeley Art Museum. Human/Nature: Artists Respond to a Changing Planet: Exhibition explores relationship between human environment and the natural world. Featuring work by Mark Dion, Ann Hamilton, [illegible]. Through Sept. 27. 2625 Durant Ave. (UC Berkeley campus), Berkeley. 510-642-0808. BAMPFA.berkeley.edu.

Cal State East Bay University Art Gallery. Annual Faculty Exhibition [illegible]: Through June 4. 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd. (CSUEB campus), Hayward. 510-885-3299. Class.CSUEastBay.edu/artgallery.

Cecile Moochnek Gallery. Seasonals: Paintings and intaglio prints by [illegible]. Through May 31. 1809-D Fourth St., Berkeley. 510-549-1018. CecileMoochnek.com.

Christensen Street Gallery. Soft Sculpture: Featuring work by Emily Peters. May 8-July 6. 5829 College Ave., [illegible]. 510-655-5852.

Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts. Public Art Tours: Fifty-minute docent-led public art tours. Call 925-295-1417 to make reservations. Second Saturday of every month, 11 a.m. Continues through Aug. 29. **Public Art Tours:** Fifty-minute docent-led public art tours. Call 925-295-1417 to make reservations. Second Saturday of every month, 11 a.m. Continues through Aug. 29. 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. 925-943-1469. DLRCA.org.

Eclectic Gallery. The All-Girls Show: Sculpture, paintings, mixed media and photography by more than 30 female artists. Opening reception May 8, 7-10 p.m. May 8-June 20. **Take Mom To Entomology: The Art Works of Katie [illegible]:** Featuring insects, Victorian intaglio and recycled materials into her specimen creations & "Lady Bugs." Birthday reception May 8, 7-10 p.m. with live music by [illegible]. May 8-June 20. 10086 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-364-7281. EclecticGallery.com.

Expressions Gallery. Spring Has Sprung: Group art show. Through June 8. 2035 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4930. ExpressionsGallery.org.

Float Center. Exoskeleton: With paintings by [illegible] Berkeley, plus sculpture and jewelry by Human Shape. Opening party May 8, 6-9 p.m. with DJ [illegible]. Through June 26. 1769 [illegible], Oakland. 510-535-1702. TheFloatCenter.com.

Gallery [illegible]. Walking in the Crystal Light: Solo show featuring multi-media drawings and installation by [illegible]. Through May [illegible] Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-2843. [illegible]

Grace North Church. Photographs of a Flooding World: Linda Elvira Piedra presents 11"x20" pigment ink prints. Closing reception May 31, 1-7 p.m. Through May 31. 2138 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-848-2813.

[illegible] Institute. Beyond Boundaries: Group show with painting, sculpture, photography and collage. Through June 30. 1959 University Ave., 2nd Fl., Berkeley. 510-[illegible]

Paid Advertisement

Tech Talk

provided by:

Janus Networks

Pulse Smartpen: The First Social Media Pen

by Mielle Sullivan, Janus Networks

If you are not already familiar with it, the Pulse Smartpen by Livescribe is a computerized pen with an infrared camera and digital audio recorder that helps you link audio to handwriting. Just tap on any note or drawing on the accompanying "dot paper" and the pen will replay the portion of the recording that was recorded when the note was written. It's one of the more practical gadgets on the market, and has been gaining press and users since its launch about a year ago.

As you can imagine, a large percentage of Pulse users are college students. "My Pulse smartpen has been invaluable to me in my classes, particularly my pre-med classes, where I need to take very detailed and accurate notes," said Kai Shah, a junior at University of California Berkeley. "With my Pulse smartpen, I can pay more attention to what my professor is actually saying rather than scribbling down every single word. It's also awesome to use when I'm studying for tests."

Livescribe has taken the utility and fun of its pen one step higher by giving the Pulse a social media platform. Pulse users can post an image of their notes, along with the audio, to either the Livescribe community or Facebook. If the author allows, users can even share other people's notes with friends. The Livescribe community has ten categories of posted notes including academic notes, how-tos and art.

In order to further engage social media using college students, the company created a Facebook application called "Where are you going to college?"

The application is an interactive map that allows Facebook users to see who is going to their college, and what schools their friends are going to. Students can apply for the scholarship by putting their college on the map and writing a 140-character statement on how they plan to achieve in college. Students can submit their entries at www.livescribe.com/mapyourcollege

It's always interesting when a brand can add a social media component to its features, but for the Pulse sharing seems particularly useful. Within private online groups, students can instantly compare notes and corporate teams can hone in on essential parts of a presentation. Public uses range from the sharing of sermons to political speeches in a more dynamic way.
By linking writing, audio, the web and community, Pulse takes jotting into the 21st century.

You can contact the Author at press@janusnetworks.com

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Saturday, May 9, noon–5:30 p.m.
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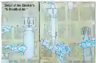
PICKS


Detail of Ala Ebtekar's "A Breath of Air."

A Breath of Air

The Iranian-American artist **Ala Ebtekar** is exhibiting a large mixed media diptych on the Berkeley campus — completing a nice antiwar hat trick with the previous Botero and Chagoya shows. It's timely again, too, with the egregious Mousavi, Noo and Ahmadinejad back in the news. Ebtekar, an alumnus of Tim Rollins' Kids of Survival, follows K.O.S. practice by painting images over collaged text. Here, various American missiles and bombs, wreathed in blue clouds, all rendered in a linear, calligraphic style, hover above blocks of Farsi and Arabic script from an eighty-year-old prayer book. The text reads as city blocks seen from above, of course. Chesterton said the lights of Broadway were a wonderland if you couldn't read. Were we ignorant of modern weaponry, this work would be elegantly beautiful. It's loaded, however, to the centers. *A Breath of Air* runs through May 25 at **Townsend Center** (UC Berkeley, Stephens Hall 220). TownsendCenter.Berkeley.edu or 510-643-9670. — *DeWitt Cheng*

Earth Days

On April 22, 1970, millions got back to the land on the first Earth Day; two generations later, mainstreamers have finally wised up. Curator **Jan Camp** celebrates environment and art reconciliation with this group show. **John Wood**'s huge painting, a cel tagistic landscape mounted just beneath the skylight, sets the tone. Below, ranged around the gallery are **Ralph Singer**'s classic-looking (though digital) scenic photographs of rock outcroppings, eroded coastlines, and isolated trees or buildings; **Tyrell Collins**' landscape-horizon paintings in oil on photo scans reminiscent of fugitive daguerreotypes and delicate hand-painted china; and installations by **Michelle Bertha** and **Andrew Kaluzynski** examining our alienation from the nature, in low and high tech, respectively. In the hallway, Camp's documentarian photographs of the late, unlamented Embarcadero Freeway remind us that "progress" can be ugly but yield striking abstract images. Reception on Friday, May 1, leaf happy, visitors get a gift. *Earth Days* runs through May 16 at **Oaknopolis Creativity Center** (447 25th St., Oakland). Oaknopolis.org or 510-663-6920. — *D.C.*

Lyric Escape

"Luddites, Buddhists, vegans, psychics, exotic mystics, dopers, [and] psychedelic visionaries," according to painter, poet, and bookseller **Lawrence Ferlinghetti**, loathe "the dominant technocratic materialist consciousness of America today." Ferlinghetti, an artist for sixty years, escapes from "skyscraper America" into the realm of imagination inhabited by visionary artists, whom he considers natural "enemies of the state." The twelve paintings assembled here by Berkeley Art Center interim Director **Kate Elbertsen** merge figuration and abstraction, exploring romantic/symbolist themes through expressionist means; critics even dubbed the poet the godfather of 1980s Italian neo-expressionism. In "Freud," a man silhouetted like a cave-painting hunter confronts love and death, eros and thanatos. In "Proust," reminiscent of Picasso's elegy for Casagemas, the bedridden writer is granted artistic immortality by "the golden bird of memory." Two "Sun Beat" paintings revisit the archetypal theme of the soul's journey. *Lyric Escape* runs through May 30 at **Berkeley Art Center** (1275 Walnut St., Berkeley). BerkeleyArtCenter.org or 510-644-6893. — *D.C.*

Measure of Time

Susan Hyde Green, Ron MooDrie Saunders, Sharon Wickham, and **Witold Wintermeyer** are showing photographs on classic themes — the night sky, flowers, architectural interiors, and urban landscapes, respectively — at **500 12th Street**, one of the Oakland Museum of California's satellite spaces. Green's color photos of full moons set against night skies ("Silver Shadow," "Reaching") recall paintings by Ryder, Gottlieb, and Still, but the foliage or clouds, overdrawn in graphite, suggest shaded emulsions, or metal-based tintypes and daguerreotypes. Saunders' sepia-toned photograms ("Salvia," "Azalea"), made by exposing plants atop photographic paper to light without the use of a camera, also suggest early photography's mixture of scientific depiction and poetic realism, as do Wickham's small, monochromatic shots of vignetted stairways ("Secret"), buildings ("Haus"), and shadowy interiors penetrated by late afternoon light ("Morandi"). Wintermeyer's color photos ("Billboard," "Radio") find beauty and drama in the contemporary urban industrial landscape seen by night. *Measure of Time* runs through June 19 at 500 12th St., Oakland. MuseumCA.org or 510-238-6836. — *D.C.*

M&G

IKAS Conference Room, Eternal Blue Heaven: Reviving the Art of Mongol Zurag: Artist and calligrapher Narmandakh Tsultem adapts a traditional Mongolian aesthetic. Through July 15. 2223 Fulton St., sixth floor, Berkeley. 510-642-2809. IKAS.berkeley.edu.

Johansson Projects, The Adam Fields: Val Britton and Michael Meyers present surreal sculptures and abstract cartography. Reception Sat., May 16, 5-8 p.m. May 9-June 20. **Jennifer and Kevin McCoy:** Presenting multimedia work that illuminates the conventions of filmmaking. Reception Sat., May 16, 5-8 p.m. May 9-June 20. 2300 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-444-9140. JohanssonProjects.com.

Kala Art Institute, [illegible]: Group show with new work in print media, paper sculpture, digital collage, photography, and video. Through June 21. 1060 Heinz Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-2977. Kala.org.

Kola Coffee, Pressing On: Regina Waddell presents eight years of front page newspaper stories in collage form. Through May 1. 432 29th Ave., Oakland. 510-261-3400, KolaCoffee.com.

Lanesin Designs Studio, Mindful Sight: Featuring photography by Gary Nilsen. Through May 30. 5151 Horton St., Emeryville. 510-420-2384.

Lucky Ju Ju Pinball Art Gallery, "Rock 'n' ROLL!" The Outlaw Art of Brandy Sargent: With stringed instruments made from pinball and other recycled found objects. Through June 2. 96-B1C, 713-E Santa Clara St., Alameda. 510-205-6793, LuckyJuju.com.

Mad Tiber, Childhood Series: Paintings by Barbara Waddell: Through May 24. 1235 San Pablo Ave., Albany. 510-526-0305.

Mercury 20 Gallery, Intimate Glimpses: Paintings and drawings by Jill McLennan. Through May 30. **Speed and Ecstasy:** Paintings and pastel drawings by Jamie Meagan. Through May 30. 25 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-464-1705, MercuryTwenty.com.

Mills College Art Museum, Young Americans: MFA exhibition curated by Kerli Cabin features work by Andrew Witrak, Annie Vought, Brian Caraway, Gena Byers, Esther Traugot, Joseph Baroghel, Kate Pravdich, Leigh Merrill, Modesta Covarrubias, and Ronnie Pittman. Through May 31. **Young Americans, Mills Through MFA Exhibition:** Sixth line drawings, knit sweaters, large-scale photographs, sculptures, portraits, abstract paintings, and installations by 10 artists. Through May 31. 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. 510-430-2164.

NIAD Art Center, Re/Terrestrial: Disability, Interior and Sculpture: Featuring artwork by Nancy Ford, Lance King, Bobbie Sanderson, Judith Scott and Laura Satan. Through May 11. 101 23rd St. (Florence Sutkin-Kim Gallery), Richmond. 510-620-6720. NIADArt.org.

Colorpoint Creativity Center: Earth Days Group show with paintings on metal, paintings on canvas, installations, and black-and-white digital photography depicting natural forms. Through May 10. **Essen Days** Environmental how Annual by Jon Diemp featuring work by Treat Collins, Ralph Singer, John Waugh, Michelle Bortin, and Andrew Kalugryte. Through May 16. 4427 25th St., Oakland.

PhotoCentral Gallery and Preserved. [illegible]: Five Decades of Photography Through June 14. 1099 E St., Hayward. 510-881-6721. PhotoCentral.org.

Reservoir Gallery: 5 Room Color photographs by Fraser Bennett, Eric Kaplan-Cahen, Carlo Lucero, Martha Serene, and Ted Watson. Through June 20. 2235 Fifth St., Berkeley. 510-644-1430. Photolabour Reservoir gallery.htm.

Richmond Art Center: West Contra Costa Unified School Annual 49th Annual Student Art Show Through May 15. 2540 Barrett Ave., Richmond. 510-620-6772. TheRichmondArtCenter.org.

Rowan Museum Gallery: Small Roins With stereographs by Hannah [illegible]. Through May 9. 330 40th St., Oakland. 510-384-5344. RowanMuseum.com.

San Pablo Arts Gallery: Rowan Common Form Prints by Sheri Ann Benton and Callie Wedding, plus ceramics by Karie Warner. Opening reception Sat., May 9, 3-5 p.m. May 9-June 14. One Oakland Sq., 13828 San Pablo Ave., Bonita Hall, Civic Center, San Pablo. 510-836-2665. CiSanPablo.ca.us.

Swarm Studios + Gallery: [illegible] Solo exhibition of an Opening and sculpture installations by John Casey. Through May 17. **Nature Boy** Pine [illegible] sculptures by Ron Porcella. Through May 16. **Beghine Through** Group exhibition representing the new administration in Washington. Through May 16. 560 2nd St. #4, Oakland. 510-839-2787. SwarmStudios.net.

The Compound: Room Rebbe Featuring balloon paintings and sewing saturing by Room Fisher, founder and tea bag painter of Oakland's Nano Organic Tea. Through May 31. 6604 San Pablo Ave., Oakland. 510-655-9019. TheCompoundGallery.com.

Women's Cancer Resource Center: Body & Soul Group show featuring work by James Gaylen, Ajaan Mannen, and Karen Sanchez. Through May 8. 5741 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-420-4149 ex. 111. WCRC.org.

MUSEUMS

Berkeley Art Museum: Galaxy: A Hundred or So Stars [illegible] in the Nature Eye Through Aug. 30. 2625 Durant Ave. (UC Berkeley campus), Berkeley. 510-642-0808. BAMPFA.berkeley.edu.

Berkeley Public Library: Berkeley Branch: [illegible] Doll Show With museum sewing machines, pendant quilts, and 12" to 1" scale dolls. Through May 11. 2090 Kittredge St. (at Shattuck Ave.), Berkeley. 510-981-6100. BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

The Chinese-American Experience in California: Forgotten Contributions of the Bay Area Chinese Anthropology exhibit focuses on Oakland, of Chinese from a San Leandro Oakland, etc. Through June 11. Free. Cal State East Bay, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward. 510-885-3896. www.csuhayward and CSUEastBay.edu/1882_Festival.

Cal State East Bay University Art Gallery: Life in the Ice Age Exhibit looks at the lives of Chinese immigrants during the 1800s. Through May 20. 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward. 510-885-3299. CSUEastBay.edu/artgallery.

Habitat Children's Museum: Bad Game The ongoing exhibition of Roger Bonton's paintings, Shot Game: The Big 6's vs. The Missing Person. Daily. **Earth in the Farm** Interactive exhibit where hard comes from. Young children can dress as farmers, collect eggs in the big red barn, and a house, fish in the pond, and build with Barrenaus Herbivore. Through Sept. 15. 2005 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-647-1111. Habitat.org.

Museum of Ethnic Art: Ethnic Art: Pet Portraiture A celebration of pets in mosaic. Daily. **California Ethnic Artists: Celebrating Diversity Through Oakland** An ongoing group show. Daily. 2901 Chippewa St., Oakland. 510-437-9989, InstituteofMosaicArt.com.

Judah L. Magnes Museum: Memory Lab Intensive installation where visitors to share digital family albums and exhibitions based on their own documents, photographs, and memorabilia. Daily. **Projections** Multimedia fiction from the museum's extensive California archival, documentary, and ideological films. Daily. 2911 Russell St., Berkeley. 510-549-6950. Magnes.org.

Lindsay Wildlife Museum: Lindsay Wildlife Museum Celebrates Owl's Day Lindsay Wildlife has adopted 6 owls with injuries that would impair their survival in the wild. They include a great grey owl, a horned owl, a great horned owl, and barn owl, all of which are native to the Bay Area. May 9-10, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. $6-$7. 1931 1st Ave., Walnut Creek. 925-935-1978. WildlifeMuseum.org.

MOCHA: Museum of Children's Art: Once Upon a Time: Corduroy's Annual Ice Then and Now Celebrating the work of Don Freeman, author and illustrator of *Corduroy*, the classic story of a bear who got stranded in the toy department of a big store. May 9-June 14. 538 9th St. (Suite 210), Oakland. 510-465-8770. MOCHA.org.

Oakland Museum of California: Spanish California Painting in No Berkeley Object Senior curator Karen Tsujimoto presents more than 40 Cantwell's paintings. Through Aug. 23. **Rabbits of Gagnebin: Surrounding Parklands in the 21st Century** Photographs by Jeff Jones and prose by retired National Park Interpretation Ranger William C. Tweed. Through Aug. 23. **The Annual Museum in Shadow: From Tonga to the Bosnian** Tracing the history and culture of Oakland Albanos brought to Mexico in the 1500s. Exhibit covers the story of Yanga, a runaway slave after the abolition of slavery in 1810, the Mexican War of Independence, and 18th-century caste paintings. May 5-Aug. 23. **Be A Part of the California History Gallery** Oakland Museum solicits photographs of babies born in California, or children who moved here by age 3. For info call Carlene Smith at 510-238-3888 or Robert Booth at 510-238-3447. Sun., May 10, 1-4 p.m. 1000 Oak St., Oakland. 510-238-2200. MuseumCA.org.

Oakland Museum of California at City Center: The Art and History of Early California Exploring the story of California from Native American tribes to the Gold Rush. Daily. $5-$8. 500 12th St., Oakland. 510-238-6226. MuseumCA.org.

Peralta Hacienda Historical Park: Becoming California: Becoming Oakland Exhibit on local history documents the Ohlone tribes, the rise of cattle ranchers, and the development of a metropolis. Plus Mexican pastries and hand-made tamales with master chefs. Sat., May 9, 12-5:30 p.m. $1 suggested donation. 2465 34th Ave., Oakland. 510-532-9142. PeraltaHacienda.org.

Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology: From the Maker's Hand From the permanent collection, a selection of works from China, Egypt, and Peru, plus Peru, finished in Africa, North America, and the Mediterranean. Daily. **Native Californian Cultures** The "visible storage" exhibition features some 500 objects from the museum's collection of native Californian Annual. Daily. Kroeber Hall (UC Berkeley), Berkeley. 510-643-7648. HearstMuseum.berkeley.edu.

Townsend Center: Plugin Oakland Components: Show Featuring architectural drawings of René Davids, Professor of Architecture and Urban Design, and Taylor Medlin, MA student in Architecture. Through May 15. 220 Stephens Hall, UC Berkeley, Berkeley. 510-643-9670. TownsendCenter.berkeley.edu.

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THEATER & DANCE

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

[illegible] [illegible] directed by [illegible] and [illegible], featuring [illegible], and 15 other [illegible]. Plus 2 musical duos: Green & Root, and [illegible] & Frank Buffum. Sat., May 9, 5, 6:30 & 8 p.m., $10-$15. Studio 12, 2525 Eighth St., Berkeley. 510-527-8810.

[illegible] San Leandro Players production of the [illegible] musical by [illegible]. Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through May 17. $10-$15. San Leandro Museum of History Auditorium, 320 W. [illegible] Ave., San Leandro. 510-577-3990.

The Giver [illegible] directs this play about the Lois Lowry's children's book, adapted by Eric Coble. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through May 9. $4-$8, $20 [illegible]. Cal State East Bay University Theatre, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward. CSUEastBay.edu.

Impact [illegible]: Puberty Collection of ten-minute plays about awkward moments in adolescence. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through June 6. $12-$22. La Val's Subterranean Theatre, 1834 Euclid Ave. (at Hearst St.), Berkeley. 510-464-4468.

Luv: The Gay Version, The Straight Version, The Lesbian Version Actors Ensemble of Berkeley presents three versions of the play by Murray Schisgal, directed by Alan Barkan. Call 510-649-5999 to reserve. [illegible]: First Thursday-Saturday of every month, 8 p.m. Continues through May 23. $10-$12. Live Oak Theatre, 1301 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-5580.

Miss Julie Mark Jackson directs this production of August Strindberg's 1888 drama about class and seduction. [illegible]days-Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m.; Sundays, 7 p.m. Continues through May 10. $28-$50. Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-843-4822. AuroraTheatre.org.

Saint Joan David Bogdanoff directs the production of the play by George Bernard Shaw based on the legend of Joan of Arc. Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through May 10. $11-$18. Contra Costa Civic Theatre, 951 Pomona Ave., El Cerrito. 510-524-9132. CCCT.org.

Stagebridge Theatre Company's 30th Anniversary [illegible] Featuring Jane Kenworth, Barbara [illegible], a musical cabaret and champagne reception. For info, call 510-444-4755 or visit Stagebridge.org. Sat., May 9, 5 p.m. $25-$100. The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-6500. ShotgunPlayers.org.

Stagebridge Theatre Company's 30th Anniversary Showcase: "Celebrating Memories with Stories & Music" [illegible], Playback Theatre with music by David Sturtevant & friends. For info, call 510-444-4755 or visit Stagebridge.org. Fri., May 8, 8 p.m. $15-$25. The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-6500. ShotgunPlayers.org.

Stagebridge Theatre Company's 30th Anniversary Showcase: Mothers Day Celebration Featuring [illegible] Carlin & daughter Nancy Carlin, Jeanne [illegible], performing *Old School*, a play about intergenerational bonds through [illegible]. Plus songs and [illegible] Sunday & Grandma's Teeth. Sun., May 10, 2 p.m. $15-$20. [illegible]

LIVE VARIETY

[illegible] Fellowship With [illegible] with DJ Cali, Alexis the Dreamer, Abel, Will J.E. Genie & P.E.A.C.E. of Freestyle Fellowship and screening of *[illegible]*. Sat., May 9, 7 p.m. $15-$20. [illegible], 850 36th St., Oakland.

Koto Concert Featuring Koto players Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto and Brian Mitsuhiro Wong. Thu., May 7, 12:15-1 p.m. Free. Berkeley Public Library, Central Branch, 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6100. BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

South Berkeley/Albany Arts Summit Featuring the Longfellow Middle School Jazz Band, Ballet Folklorico, Dance Elevations, the La Peña Kids Kombo Workshop and the Afro-Peruvian Youth Ensemble. Wed., May 13, 7 p.m. $5-$8. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

COMEDY

Charlie Murphy Fri., May 8, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.; Sat., May 9, 7 & 9:30 p.m. $35-$45. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

Food For Thought Benefit for the Alameda County Community Food Bank, with performances by Johnny Steele, W. Kamau Bell, Richard Stockton, and Dave [illegible]. Sat., May 9, 5 p.m. $15. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542. JuliaMorgan.org.

Kirk McHenry Tue., May 12, 7:30 p.m.; Wed., May 13, 7:30 p.m.; Thu., May 14, 7:30 p.m. $10-$20. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

Mrs. Hughes Sun., May 10, 4 & 7 p.m. $20-$30. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

PICKS

The Lieutenant of Inishmore

It was probably just a happy coincidence that **Berkeley Rep** scheduled its run of Martin McDonagh's gruly comedy ***The Lieutenant of Inishmore*** around the same time that Obama declassified the Bush administration's torture memos. At any rate, it made this decade-old play — which centers on an Irish republican splinter group that mostly operated in the 1970s and 1980s — seem not only timely, but urgent. *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* is a perversely funny, high-velocity bloodbath with a trenchant political subtext. The paramilitary blue in question — inspired by the real Irish National Liberation Army — comprises several current revolutionaries who can't quite get their act together. Rather, they can't move forward with plans to free Ireland until they dispose of their lieutenant, a handsome but [illegible] sadist with a soft spot for cats. It's an unusual premise that McDonagh takes to insane lengths, requiring a little suspension of disbelief but leading up to a massive payoff. Berkeley Rep artistic director Les Waters puts his own spin on the play, adding little details (e.g., a pink bicycle with streamers, said to be the [illegible] of a kitty hit-and-run) to amplify McDonagh's humor. His version is well-acted, brilliant, and brutal. Through May 17 at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (2025 Addison St.), Berkeley. BerkeleyRep.org. — *Rachel Swan*

Kevinberne.com

The Lieutenant of Inishmore

Miss Julie

Despite being intemperate, depressive, and too neurotic to hold a marriage together, Swedish playwright August Strindberg was one of the 19th century's most astute analysts of class and gender. His 1888 drama ***Miss Julie*** — about a scandalous affair between a Count's daughter and her ambitious footman — still has resonance today, since taboo romances will never quite go out of style. Director Mark Jackson offers a revealing interpretation of *Miss Julie*, with Lauren Grace in the title role and Mark Anderson Phillips as her seducer. The actors do a remarkable job of conveying emotions through their gestures and eye movements, and of presenting a power struggle that's as much about sex as it is about social class. (Thus, hierarchies are slippery.) The story of *Miss Julie* is fascinating on its face; it's always fun to watch a pampered aristocrat leave her warm-coated bubble and get stuck on the wrong side of the tracks. But the subtext about sexuality and class barriers makes it timeless. Through May 10 at **Aurora Theatre** (2081 Addison St., Berkeley). $28-$42. AuroraTheatre.org. — *R.S.*

Saint Joan

It's no picnic being a 15th-century French military leader when the Earl of Warwick has a bounty on your head, even if you're following some divine purpose. Such was the predicament of Joan of Arc, the eponymous star of George Bernard Shaw's 1923 drama ***Saint Joan***. Shaw wrote the play as both a history and an encomium just three years after Joan of Arc was finally canonized. Originally, it ran to three and a half hours and contained long swaths of didactical text. David Bogdanoff edited the original script for his current Contra Costa Civic Theatre production, which stars the alluring Kate Culbertson as Joan, with a rather large ensemble of clergy and dignitaries. Even with the cuts, Bogdanoff preserves the drama and humor of *Saint Joan*, and even keeps some of the bombast that Shaw stuck in his original version. Through May 10 at **Contra Costa Civic Theatre** (951 Pomona Ave., El Cerrito). $11-$18. CCCT.org. — *R.S.*

THEATER

LUV IN THE TIME OF GENDER-BENDING

Actors Ensemble offers straight, gay, and lesbian versions of the same love story

By Rachel Swan

Alan Barkan

Stanley Spenger and Harold Pierce in Luv: The Gay Version.

With its absurdist take on romance and infidelity, Murray Schisgal's play *Luv* may have seemed a little off the beaten path when it debuted on Broadway in 1964. The play opens with a surprise reunion of two college friends: the striver Milt Manville and slacker Harry Berlin, who is down on his luck and about to jump off a bridge. After an unusual rambling conversation, Milt persuades Harry to hook up with his wife Ellen so that he can shack up with his mistress, Linda. An odd and perilous love triangle precipitates. By 1964 standards it may have been hilarious, yet in today's hook-up culture the script seems dated. It takes a fairly ambitious director to shore up the old humor and give it a new edge.

Enter Alan Barkan, who came up with the idea of staging three versions of Schisgal's play — a gay *Luv* story, a lesbian *Luv* story, and a straight *Luv* story — in a new production by Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. Barkan apparently came up with the idea after measuring *Luv* against Schisgal's screenplay for the 1982 film *Tootsie*, which stars Dustin Hoffman as an actor who cross-dresses to get the lead role in a soap opera. Though not ostensibly "gay," *Tootsie* showed that Schisgal is pretty free about crossing lines and bending gender. Barkan thought he could get that same kind of resonance by taking one of the playwright's "straight" works and making it queer. According to associate director Eric Carlson, it didn't take much arm-twisting to get Schisgal's approval. Still, he wouldn't allow Actors Ensemble to take other liberties with the script.

The trick, then, was to get three different casts to handle the same material in their own way, and show that the romantic blunders cut across lines of gender and sexual preference. Barkan gave his casts the same set pieces: A sand box, a street lamp, and a bridge with two signs — one that said "No Dumping: Violators will be prosecuted!" and another that offered crisis counseling. He gave them the same script with minimal alterations beyond pronouns. He offered few stage directions and allowed his actors to interpret specific details (e.g., the paper bag that Harry wears over his head) as they saw fit. He didn't let the casts view each other's work.

Ergo, Barkan's three iterations of *Luv*, which alternate throughout the month at Live Oak Theatre. I saw the gay version, which starred Harold Pierce as the neurotic Harry Berlin, Stanley Spenger as Milt Manville, and Federico Edwards as Milt's husband Eliot. The opening dialogue offers few cues to brand the play as "gay." Milt and Harry swap stories about their hard-knock childhoods. Milt talks up the secondhand bric-a-brac business that requires him to sift through garbage cans, and Harry grouses about his tics — he has weird paroxysms that render him temporarily deaf or mute. Until Milt's first mention of his husband, it seems like a play about fraternal bonding and love of the brotherly sort. But after the "gotcha" moment all sorts of questions pop up and remain unanswered. For one thing, it's not entirely clear how Milt knew that Harry was gay, or how Harry knew Milt was gay, since he seems to unquestioningly accept the idea of husband Elliot. All of a sudden their backstory becomes a lot more interesting and a lot more relevant — though it's up to the audience members to fill it in.

The original script requires an even bigger suspension of disbelief when Ellen comes in, ready to shank her unfaithful husband, and instead falls hopelessly in love with her husband's friend Harry, after knowing him for about twenty minutes. Perhaps you could blame such erratic behavior on spite and resentment for the man who done her wrong. But then you also have to believe that someone as practical minded as Ellen Manville would fall for a lout like Harry Berlin. In this case, Ellen of course is Eliot, played by Edwards as an artsy, swishy, sashaying, in [illegible] patronizing, fashionable queen with a photographic memory. He and Pierce's Harry seem utterly wrong for each other. (For that matter he also seems like a poor match for a Dumpster diver like Milt.) But that makes for a lot of comic effect.

Show Details

Luv plays through May 23 at Berkeley's Live Oak Theatre (1301 Shattuck Ave.). Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m. $10-$12. AEofBerkeley.org

Barkan's production leaves a lot of ambiguity in time and space. Visually, the set could belong to any part of the United States (it's supposed to be a bridge in New York) and any era between 1964 and the present. The actors wear modern clothes but their dialogue doesn't quite read as contemporary, nor did the Rolling Stones song that played as the curtain went up. Otherwise, most of mechanics of the play work, as long as you buy in to the shotgun wedding between Ellen/Harry, Elliot/Harry, and Ellen/Harriet — and, when that fails, the suddenly resuscitated romance between Milt/Ellen, Milt/Elliot, and Melissa/Ellen. Overall fidelity to Schisgal's 1964 script seems to work. Most of the old jokes still have some ring in 2009, and it's always fun — and even a little transgressive — to see how the same love triangle works with a different gender configuration. Granted, a few things get lost in translation. And a lot gets added. ●

Rachel.Swan@EastBayExpress.com

LECTURES & LIT

Logan and Noah Miller with Brad Dourif

Sad Dad

Identical twins Logan and Noah Miller made a film about their homeless dad, then wrote a book about making the film.

On January 5, 2006, the day Daniel Arthur Miller died alone on the cement floor of a cell in the Marin County Jail, he was only 59, and had been homeless for fifteen years. Upon seeing his cut-open corpse on a coroner's table — "even with the blood, there was a peacefulness about him that gave him back ten years of his life" — his sons **Logan and Noah Miller** vowed to honor him by making a film based on his story and theirs: a story of how alcohol and gambling destroyed a working-class American family, robbing a man of his dignity, his relationship with his wife and children, and finally his life.

That was quite a vow, considering that the identical twin brothers had neither a bankroll nor significant Hollywood contacts at the time. Yet last year, their film *Touching Home* became reality. Written, directed, and produced by the Miller twins, it stars such talents as Ed Harris, Brad Dourif, and Robert Forster. (Harris, of course, plays the dad.) How did this happen? The twins tell all about "our moviemaking hell ride" in their lively but poignant book *Either You're In or You're in the Way*, which they will discuss at **Moe's Books** (2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley) on Monday, May 11.

"We share everything," the Millers write. "It's been like that since the womb. ... We have one cell phone, one computer, and one car between us. ... We've always been best friends and have always helped each other, except when we tried to resolve our conflicts by pounding one another." Each calls the other Bro, and they don't even fight over women: "If there's only one princess, then Bro can have her. We cook for each other and serve more food to the other guy."

They hadn't planned to be filmmakers. They'd planned to be baseball stars: "It had been our dream since we had dreams." But when "baseball didn't work out ... we had no backup plan, limited education, no résumé for any job above manual labor." (Tellingly, they write "résumé" in the singular, as if this, too, would of course be shared.) So, while working as bingo callers and club bouncers, they started writing a screenplay about their youth in Lagunitas — "a town of a couple hundred outlaws and outcasts doing their best to live off the grid" — and Fairfax, where their mom was a gardener and their dad an alcoholic roofer who went so wild that the boys considered him "on Mars" while under the influence.

When they last saw him, two months before he died, they told him about the screenplay. "Who's gonna play me?" he asked the twins. "He's gotta be good-looking." 7:30 p.m., free. MoesBooks.com

— *Anneli Rufus*

LECTURES

The Art and Culture of Cuba With painter, musician, and art instructor Sue Matthews. Thu., May 7, 7 p.m., free. Oakland Main Library, 125 14th Street, Oakland.

Free Introductory Talks on Meditation and Spiritual Lifestyle With guest speaker Sant Rajit Singh. Wed., May 6, 1:30 p.m., Wed., May 20, 7:30 p.m., free. Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St. at Bonita St., Berkeley. 510-846-[illegible].

Mengfei Zeng, Artist's Talk with [illegible] Artist and calligrapher discusses his work. Thu., May 7, 4 p.m., free. IEAS Conference Room, 2223 Fulton St., sixth floor, Berkeley. 510-642-2809, IEAS.berkeley.edu

[illegible] & Grad School Learn how to do both concurrently. Tue., May 12, 6:30-8 p.m., free. Livermore City Council Chambers, 3575 Pacific Ave., Livermore.

Poopology 101 East Bay Regional Park District presents a lecture on scats, tracks, runs and other animal signs. Thu., May 7, 4 p.m., free. Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. 925-376-6852.

Wendy Kopp: Eliminating Education Inequity Lecture by the CEO and founder of Teach for America. Wed., May 6, 6 p.m., $12-$18. Commonwealth Club Office, 595 Market St. (2nd floor), San Francisco. 415-597-6712

LITERARY EVENTS

Annual Spring Book Sale Books by Friends of the Kensington Library. Sat., May 9, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun., May 10, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., free. Kensington Branch Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. 510-524-3043.

Brian Yaeger Discussing his book *Red, White & Brew*. Wed., May 13, 7:30 p.m., free. Triple Rock Brewery, 1920 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-2739. www.triplerockbrewery.com.

California of the Past Digital storytelling station allows people to record [illegible]. Daily, free. Hayward Public Library, 835 C St., Hayward. 510-293-8685, Library.hayward-ca.gov

Collage Work Shop with Bob Barner Picture book author teaches children how to make collages and presents his new book *Dinosaurs Roar, Butterflies Soar*. Sat., May 9, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., free. Books Inc., 1344 Park St., Alameda. 510-522-2226, Booksinc.net.

Contra Costa County Reading Festival: Mark Curtis Host of Comcast newsmakers discusses his work as a political correspondent and KTVU news anchor. Thu., May 7, [illegible] p.m., free. Orinda Library Auditorium, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda. 925-254-2184. **[illegible]** Reading Festival celebration with singers, dancers, clowns, and [illegible]. Sat., May 9, 11 a.m., free. El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way, El Sobrante. 510-374-3991. www.contra-costa.lib.ca.us. **Francisco Jiménez** Migrant worker-turned-professor discusses his life and his children's book series. Fri., May 8, 3 p.m., free. Contra Costa College Quad, Entrance of El Portal Dr. and Castro St., San Pablo. **"Who is the Lemony Snicket and why does he keep following me?"** Daniel Handler aka Lemony Snicket, discusses his writing. Sat., May 9, 7 p.m., free. Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr. (at N. Broadway), Walnut Creek. 925-943-5852.

Drop-in Poetry Workshop Second Wednesday of every month, 1-3 p.m. Continues through June 10, free. Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-526-3720, ACLibrary.org.

Tim Hoffman Discussing *Appomattox*. Thu., May 7, 7:30 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222, MrsDalloways.com.

Filmmakers Logan and Noah Miller Mon., May 11, 7:30 p.m., free. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2087.

First Thursdays A monthly open-mic with featured readers and/or a featured book. First Thursday of every month, 7-9 p.m., free. Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-526-3720, ACLibrary.org.

Jennifer Higgs Vetter Reading and signing her book *Down By the Station*. Wed., May 6, 1 p.m., free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965, DieselBookstore.com.

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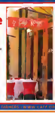

PICKS

Art and Culture of Cuba

Zorro, cha-cha-cha, salsa, habanera, rumba — Cuban music is a rich grab bag of influences, traditions, and genius. At the **Oakland Main Library** (125 14th St., Oakland) on Thursday, May 7, musician, painter/art teacher **Sue Matthews** presents a lecture and slide show on the history and culture of Cuba with tips on Cuba's current art and music scenes. 6 p.m., free. OaklandLibrary.org. — *Anneli Rufus*

Narmandakh Tsultem

With its seemingly endless plains and moonscapes, Mongolia is a remote region of rare natural beauty that few Westerners get to see firsthand. At the **Institute of East Asian Studies** (2223 Fulton St., Berkeley) on Thursday, May 7, artist/calligrapher **Narmandakh Tsultem** (whose work is currently featured in the IEAS Gallery) discusses traditional Mongolian painting. The event will also feature Mongolian music performances. 4 p.m., free. IEAS.Berkeley.edu — *A.R.*

Russell Howze.

Russell Howze

It's quick. It's cheap. It's often surreptitious, and it's often only as permanent as weather and sandblasters permit. At **Diesel** (5433 College Ave., Berkeley) on Tuesday, May 12, StencilArchive.org founder **Russell Howze** presents *Stencil Nation: Graffiti, Community, and Art*, which includes work from more than 350 artists in 28 countries, along with essays and how-to tips. 7 p.m., free. DieselBookstore.com — *A.R.*

Reza Aslan

What motivates Al Qaeda? In *How to Win a Cosmic War: Confronting Radical Islam*, CBS News Middle East analyst **Reza Aslan** asserts that what jihadists want from this life is so unattainable that only a holy war can quell their angst. [illegible] here Aslan discusses his theories at the **First Congregational Church** (2345 Channing Way, Berkeley) on Tuesday, May 12. 7:30 p.m., $10, $5 for students. BerkeleyArts.org — *A.R.*

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Jennifer [illegible]: Discussing *Down By the Station*. Wed., May 6, 7 p.m., free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

[illegible]: Discussing *The Purity Myth: How America's Obsession with Virginity Is Hurting Young Women*. Wed., May 6, 7 p.m., free. Revolution Books, 2425 Channing Way, Berkeley. 510-848-1196.

Judy Fong and Elaine Fong: Delivering a slide lecture of their book, *The Adventures of [illegible] Fong: Clandestine Kid, Stable Bowboy, Prisoner of War*. Thu., May 7, 7 p.m., free. El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 510-526-7512. CCCLib.org.

Mario [illegible] and [illegible]: Wed., May 6, 7:30 p.m., free. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2087.

Martinez Library Bookworms: Second Tuesday of every month, 6:45 p.m., free. Martinez Library, 740 Court St., Martinez. 925-646-2898. www.contra-costa.lib.ca.us/libraries/branch.html#martinez.

Music of the World/[illegible]: [illegible] Fourth and Second Sunday of every month, 3:30 p.m., free. [illegible] Books, 5298 Adeline St., Berkeley.

Peter [illegible]: Meeting the Translator of Grigoris Balakian's *Armenian Golgotha*. Wed., May 13, 2 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222. MrsDalloways.com.

Pleasant Hill Library Book Club: Second Tuesday of every month, 7 p.m., free. Pleasant Hill Library, 1750 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill. 925-646-6434.

The [illegible] Book [illegible]: First Thursday of every month, 7 p.m. El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way, El Sobrante. 510-374-3991. www.contra-costa.lib.ca.us/libraries/branch.html#elsobrante.

Russell Howze: Discussing and signing copies of *Stencil Nation*. Tue., May 12, 7 p.m., free. Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

Ruth Reichl: Discussing her book *Not Becoming My Mother: and Other Things She Taught Me Along the Way* in honor of Mother's Day. Sun., May 10, 7 p.m., $45 includes copy of *Not Becoming My Mother*, wine and dessert. Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-848-3827. HillsideClub.org.

Shawna Yang Ryan: Discussing *Water Ghosts*. Wed., May 6, 7:30 p.m., free. Books Inc., 1344 Park St., Alameda. 510-522-2226. BooksInc.net.

Spanish Writer Javier Calvo and Translator Mara Faye Lethem: Discussing Calvo's *Wonderful World*. Tue., May 12, 7:30 p.m., free. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2087.

[illegible]: Discussing [illegible] *Why Smart People Make [illegible] Decisions*. Fri., May 8, 7:30 p.m., free. Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts, 2904 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-704-8222. MrsDalloways.com.

PUBLIC INTEREST

Amnesty International Monthly Meeting: All are welcome. Second Monday of every month, 7:30 p.m., Diesel, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

[illegible] General Meeting: Thursdays, 7 p.m., free. Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-0751.

East Bay [illegible]: Opportunity for job seekers to network with company representatives needing to fill jobs in administration, customer [illegible], engineering, [illegible], retail, sales and [illegible], social services, transportation and more. Opportunities range from entry-level to management. Tue., May 12, 12-4 p.m., free. Hilton Garden Inn, 1800 Powell St., Emeryville. 510-658-9300.

Food Stamp Workshop for Oakland Library Members: An Alameda County Community Food Bank representative shows how to apply for food stamps. [illegible] Second Tuesday of every month, 2:30-4:30 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library Asian Branch, 388 9th St., Suite 190 (Pacific Renaissance Plaza), Oakland. 510-238-3400. OaklandLibrary.org.

Food Not Bombs General Meeting: Planning meeting for upcoming and ongoing Food Not Bombs events. First Wednesday of every month, 7:30 p.m., free. Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-0751.

More Listings Online
Get info about dozens more literary events at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

SPOKEN WORD

Café Poetry: Featured readers and an open mic. Richard Moore, and [illegible] and Kirk Allen host. [illegible] Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., donations requested. La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

First Thursdays: A monthly open mic with featured readers and/or a featured poet. First Thursday of every month, 7-9 p.m. Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-526-3720. AClibrary.org.

[illegible]: A night of poetry and spoken word. Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 p.m., donations requested. Eastside Cultural Center, 2277 International Blvd., Oakland. 510-533-6629.

[illegible] Poetry [illegible]: Poetry [illegible] and open mic launched by Gabi Jensen, [illegible], Randy England, and Tim Donnelly. Second Friday of every month, 7 p.m., free. [illegible] Caffe, 1854 Euclid Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-5278.

Open Mic with [illegible]: Thursdays, 7 p.m., $5. Crossroads Community Coffee & Coffeehouse, 1303 High St., Alameda. 510-864-2600. CrossroadsCoffee.org.

[illegible]: W/ Cassandra, Indigo, & Jim Martin. Fridays, 7:30 p.m., free. House of Unity Eastmont Town Center (7200 Bancroft Ave., Ste. 227), Oakland. 510-436-9930.

Second Saturday Prose & Poetry Meeting: Poetry reading and open mic. [illegible] of every month, 7-9 p.m. Frank Bette Center for the Arts, 1601 Paru St., Alameda. 510-523-6957. FrankBetteCenter.org.

Thursday at [illegible]: A weekly spoken word and poetry gathering. Thursdays, 7 p.m. Free. [illegible] word-fest. Mediterraneum Caffe, 2475 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-1128.

[illegible]: Poets, storytellers, musicians, and all other artists are invited to share their work. Arrive early to sign up. Second and Fourth Friday of every month, 7:30 p.m., free. [illegible] Coffeehouse, 645 [illegible] Ave., San Leandro. 510-569-[illegible]. [illegible]Coffeehouse.com.

EAST BAY BICYCLE COALITION'S

BIKE TO WORK DAY GUIDE

www.ebbc.org

BIKE TO TRANSIT DAY

BIKE TO WORK DAY

MAY 14, 2009

BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY
MAY 14 2009

Calendar of Events

Farmer's Markets Outreach
San Leandro May 6 4 8pm
Parrott Street
Concord May 7 4 8pm Todos
Santos Park
Berkeley
May 9
10am-2pm
Center Street

Bicycle Safety Classes
Union City May 7
Walnut Creek May 21
Fruitvale (en espanol) June 13
register at ebbc org/safety

El Cerrito Bicycle Safety Day
Saturday May 16 12 4pm
DMV parking lot
Free Drop-In Bicycle Safety Day
for bicyclists of all ages

Oakland BTWD Pancake Breakfast
May 14 7-9am
Oakland City Hall, One
Frank Ogawa Plaza
Free pancakes!!!!!
Prizes
Valet bike parking by
EBBC

BIKE AWAY FROM WORK PARTY
May 14 5 30-8 30pm
Temescal District
Telegraph & 49th
- Cyclecide
  Heavy Pedal
  Bike Rodeo
- Bicycle
  Fashion Show
- Raffle DJ food & drink
- Bike Commuter of the Year
  Awards

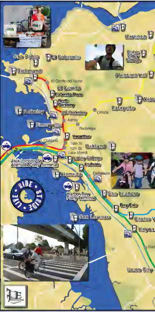
Oakland Museum Bike Trippers
May 17 10am-12noon
Meet at 10th Street entrance
Explore Oakland and its
environs with the
museum s docents

Green Albany Day
May 17 11am-3pm
Veterans Memorial
Building Memorial Park Valet bike
parking by Albany Strollers & Rollers

Berkeley Family Festival & Kids Bike Rodeo
June 13 11am-3pm
San Pablo Park
Bike safety free
helmets rides
prizes

Bike To Work Day
May 14, 2009
ENERGIZER STATIONS
West of the Hills

City	Name	Location	Hours AM	PM
El Sobrante				
	The Pedaler	3826 San Pablo Dam Road	7:00-9:00	4:00-6:00
San Pablo				
	CARS (Complete Auto Repair Service)	13062 San Pablo Avenue	7:00-9:00	
Richmond				
	Richmond Greenway Bicycle Path	Ohio Ave & Harbor Way	6:00-9:00	
	Lucretia Edwards Shoreline Path	S end of Marina Way @ Bay Trail	6:00-9:00	
	Richmond Kaiser Lab Main Entrance	914 Marina Way South	6:00-9:00	
Albany				
		Marin & Ohlone Greenway	7:00-9:00	
Berkeley				
	Missing Link Bike Coop	Shattuck & University	7:00-9:30	
		Shattuck &Channing	7:00-9:00	
		Russell & Telegraph	7:00-9:00	
	Rosa Parks School	9th & University	7:00-8:00	
	Malcolm X Elementary School	Ashby & King	7:00-9:00	
	Berkeley Arts Magnet	Virginia & Milvia	7:00-9:00	
	Berkwood Hedge School	1809 Bancroft Way @ McKinley	6:30-9:00	
	Sproul Plaza	Bancroft & Telegraph	7:00-11:00	4:00-6:00
	Berkeley Bike Ped Bridge	On the I-80 Bike/Ped Bridge	7:00-9:00	
	Kaiser Regional Labs	1725 Eastshore Hwy	6:30-9:00	
Emeryville				
	Emeryville City Hall	Park & Hollis	7:00-9:00	
	Novartis	Hollis & 53rd	7:00-11:00	
		Powell & Frontage Road	7:00-9:00	
		40th & San Pablo	7:00-9:00	
Alameda				
	Alameda City Hall	2263 Santa Clara Ave	6:30-9:00	
	Bay Farm Bridge	Bay Farm Island wooden walkway	7:00-8:30	
	Alameda/Oakland Ferry	Onboard (2990 Main St)	7:15, 8:20, 9:25	
	Marina Village Area	Gate 611 2021 Challenger Drive		1:00-3:00
	Harbor Bay Ferry	onboard (2 McCartney Drive)	6:30, 7:30, 8:30	
	Coast Guard Island	Main Entrance	6:00-9:00	
Oakland				
	Laney College	Fallon & 9th Street	All Day 7 to 6	
	Nomad Cafe	6500 Shattuck Ave	7:00-10:00	
	Frank Ogawa Plaza	Pancake Breakfast- 14th & Broadway	All Day 6 to 6	
	Tip Top Bike Shop	4800A Telegraph Ave		5:00-7:00
	Bike Away from Work Party	Telegraph & 49th		5:30-8:30
	In front of Z Bar	Broadway & 27th	7:00-9:00	
	On grassy knoll	Lakeside & E14th	7:00-9:00	
	Caltrans District 4	111 Grand Avenue	7:00-9:00	
	Oakland Catholic Workers	International & 37th	7:00-9:00	
	Kaiser Medical Center	Howe & MacArthur	7:00-9:00	
	Rockridge	College & Claremont	7:00-9:00	
	Roosevelt Middle School	20th Ave & E 19th Street	7:00-8:30	
	Bret Harte Middle School	MacArthur Blvd & Coolidge	7:00-8:30	
	Kaiser Regional Building	1950 Franklin and 1800 Harrison	7:00-9:00	
	Wheels of Justice	2021 Mountain Blvd	7:00-9:00	
San Lorenzo				
	Edendale Middle School	16160 Ashland Ave near Bertero Ave	7:30-8:15	
	Washington Manor Middle School	1170 Fargo St near Beatty St	7:30-8:15	
	Bohannon Middle School	800 Bockman near Via Nueva	7:30-8:15	
	Grant Elementary	879 Grant Ave.		
Hayward				
	Harder Elementary School	495 Wyeth Road	7:00-9:00	
	Fairview Elementary School	23515 Maud Avenue	6:15-9:15	
	Ruus Elementary School	28027 Dickens Ave	7:45-9:00	
	Treeview Elementary School	30565 Treeview St	7:45-9:00	
Fremont				
		Ohlone & Paseo Padre	7:00-9:00	
		Mission Court & Warm Springs Blvd	7:00-9:00	


Martinez
Diablo Valley College
San Pablo
El Sobrante
Richmond
Pleasant Hill
El Cerrito del Norte
El Cerrito
El Cerrito Plaza
North Berkeley
Wal
Lafayette
Berkeley
UC Berkeley
Orinda
Emeryville
Ashby
Rockridge
MacArthur
West Oakland
19th St
12th St
Oakland
Lake Merritt
Jack London Sq
Alameda Ferry Terminal
Laney College
Fruitvale
Alameda
Coliseum
RIDE STRONG
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Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal
San Leandro
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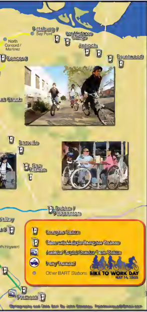

Photography and Data Base By: John Coveney,

Energizer Stations hosted by the following **Community Advocacy Organizations:** Albany Strollers & Rollers, **Bicycle-Friendly Berkeley Coalition**, Bike Alameda, **Cycles of Change**, Delta Pedalers, **East Bay** Bicycle Coalition, Lafayette Bike/Ped Advisory Committee, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce- Green Committee, Oakland Catholic Workers, TransForm CA, Walk Oakland - Bike Oakland, Waterside Workshops; **Schools and Districts:** Berkwood Hedge School, Diablo Valley College, Hayward Unified School District, Laney College, Los Medanos College, Parkmead School, UC Berkeley; **Bike and Sports Stores:** Alameda Bicycle, Hank & Frank Bicycles, Missing Link Bicycle Cooperative, REI Berkeley, Brentwood, & Concord, Renaissance Club Sport, Sports Basement, The Pedaler Bike Shop, Tip Top Bike Shop, Wheels of Justice Cyclery; **Other Businesses:** Bank of America, Bishop Ranch, CARS (Complete Auto Repair Service), General Electric Industrial Sensing, Grafika Design Studio, Hacienda Business Park, Kaiser Antioch Medical Center, **Kaiser Permanente-Oakland**, Kaiser Permanente Regional Laboratory, Nomad Cafe, Novartis, SunPower, Whole Foods- **Walnut Creek; Transportation Agencies:** 511 Contra Costa, Caltrans, County Connection, **Other Governmental Agencies:** Alameda County Public Works, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, US Coast Guard and the following **Municipal Governments** Antioch, Berkeley, Dublin, El Cerrito, Emeryville, Fremont, Pittsburg, Richmond, San Leandro, San Pablo, San Ramon, Union City, Walnut Creek, and the Town of Danville

BART and Train Stations

(or immediately adjacent)

West of the Hills

Richmond BART	Upper Courtyard, near bike lockers	6:00-9:00	
El Cerrito Plaza		7:00-9:00	
North Berkeley BART Station		6:30-9:00	
MacArthur BART Station		6:30-9:00	
Fruitvale Bikestation	Fruitvale Transit Village	7:00-10:00	
San Leandro BART Station		7:00-9:00	
Bay Fair BART Station	Ashland- unincorp. Alameda County	7:00-9:00	
Hayward BART Station		7:30-9:00	
Union City BART		7:00-9:00	
Fremont BART Station		7:00-9:00	4:00-7:00
Castro Valley BART Station		7:00-9:00	

East of the Hills

Martinez Capitol Corridor Train Station		6:15-8:45 AM	
Concord BART Station		7:00-9:00 AM	
Pleasant Hill BART Station		6:30-9:00	4:00-6:00
Walnut Creek	Ygnacio Valley Rd/N. California St	6:00-9:00	4:30-6:30
Lafayette Plaza	Mt. Diablo Blvd. & Moraga Rd	6:30-8:30	5:00-6:00
Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station		7:00-9:00	

East of the Hills

City	Name	Location	Hours AM	PM
Martinez				
	Capitol Corridor Train Station	601 Marina Vista Drive	6:15-8:45	
	1/2 mile west, N end Iron Horse Trail	5019 Imhoff Pl	7:00-9:30	
Pittsburg				
	Los Medanos College	Campus Quad	9:30-12:30 PM	
	DeAnza Trail	at Railroad Rd	7:00-9:00	
Antioch				
	Sutter Delta Hospital	Canal Trail & Lone Tree Way	6:30-8:00	4:00-6:00
	Kaiser Antioch Medical Center	Deer Valley Rd & Wellness Way	7:30-9:30	
Brentwood				
	Brentwood Park	2nd & Oak Street	7:00-9:00	
	Sand Creek Trail	at Shady Willow Lane	7:00-9:00	
Walnut Creek				
	Diablo Foods Market	S. Broadway & Newell Ave	7:00-9:00	
	Contra Costa Canal Trail	at N. Wiget Lane	7:30-9:00	4:30-6:30
	Iron Horse Trail	& Canal Trail crossing	6:30-9:00	4:30-6:30
Danville				
	Pocket Park	Iron Horse Trail behind Lunardi's	6:00-9:00	
	Iron Horse Trail	at Paraiso Dr	6:00-9:00	
San Ramon				
	San Ramon Transit Center		6:00-9:00	
	Bishop Ranch Transportation Center		6:30-9:00	3:00-5:00

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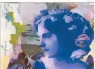
BODY & SOUL

Pick a Card, Any Card

Make your own divination deck at a free workshop

Tarot cards are all well and good. The images printed on them — cups, swords, coins, stakes, royalty, skeletons, and the like — are so universal that seekers around the world have been using them for divination purposes for more than two hundred years. But imagine making this process even more personal with cards you've created yourself, using images you chose yourself. Get started at a free **Introductory SoulCollage Workshop for Women** at **4848 MacArthur Blvd.**, Oakland, on Sunday, May 10, led by licensed psychotherapist Jen Robertson.

Developing the SoulCollage idea was "a three-stage unfolding awareness process," says Robertson, who has been using art as a tool for personal exploration since the 1960s and who founded and directed the San Francisco Women's Art Center during the 1970s. "In the early 1980s," she remembers, "I came across the Secret Dakini Oracle, a deck of tantric divination cards created by Penny Slinger with Nik Douglas." The images on the cards were full-color collages, and "I found them extremely useful for my own personal reflection. In 1986 I took an expressive art therapy class at John F. Kennedy University where one of the techniques I learned was making small collages on cards to use with clients as a method for self-exploration." The actual SoulCollage process was developed in the late 1980s by a series of therapists seeking to merge "world myths, spirituality, archetypal psychotherapy, and creativity."


Detail of a SoulCollage card

In workshops, participants use images, such as family photographs, that they've brought themselves, along with images provided by the host. These, Robertson says, "can come from almost unlimited places" such as seed packets and sheet music. The images are then glued to five-inch-by-eight-inch heavy card stock.

Just as with the tarot, Robertson says one consults SoulCollage cards to "tap into the 'higher self' and the collective unconscious in order to gain insight and understanding, which are difficult to access with the logical mind. Some might say that it is a way to directly connect to the right brain to achieve a more complete understanding combining right- and left-brain functions." When consulting the cards, "the reader poses an open-ended question. ... Since the reader created the card, the reader is more directly connected to the images and the meanings that they hold for her/him than with tarot. The reader then gives the image a voice and answers the question by saying 'I am the one who ... and ... What I can tell you about the issue is ....'" The reading can be done alone or with others, who observe and document the findings for later analysis.

"The process is potent," Robertson says, "because it evokes the power to listen to oneself in a very deep and mindful way." 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. For reservations, send an e-mail to ywissory@yahoo.com or call 510-259-8606.

— Anneli Rufus

PERSONAL GROWTH

Celebrate Recovery A weekly meeting to discuss life-changing principles. Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Crossroads Community Church, 911 MacArthur Blvd., San Leandro. 510-430-3687. CrossroadsCommunity.org.

Chemical Dependency Workshops A weekly workshop for users, friends of users, parents of users, and children of users. Topics rotate weekly. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon. Free. Alta Bates Summit Medical Center Health Education Center, 400 Hawthorne Ave., Oakland. 510-869-6000.

Drop-In Dream Group [illegible] PhD facilitates this weekly discussion group. No [illegible] experience is necessary. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-noon. $10. Practical Dreamwork, 534 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-444-[illegible]383. PracticalDreamwork.com.

Food for Thought Readings by Berkeley psychic [illegible]. Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31. $15. [illegible] Gallery, 1808 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4404.

Mandana Community Recovery Dream Friday Night Meditation Meditation history, posture and breath techniques, chakra exploration, and different styles of meditation. Fridays, 8-9 p.m. Free for Mandana CRC members, $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3888 Howe St., Oakland. 510-595-8880.

Mandana Community Recovery Dream Tuesday Education Presentation A different health or spiritual topic that can help with addiction recovery is addressed each week. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Free for Mandana CRC members, $3 for nonmembers. Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3888 Howe St., Oakland. 510-595-8880.

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

4th Annual Women & Religion Celebration of women's empowerment, drumming, and music with [illegible] of Daughters of the Goddess, plus marketplace with women's art, crafts, clothing, jewelry, candles, ritual objects, and [illegible]. Sat., May 9, 6-9 p.m. $30. [illegible] of Truth Spiritual Center, 1300 Grand St., Alameda. 510-522-3308. [illegible]ofTruth.com.

Core Curriculum Tuesday Nights Courses open to everyone but highly recommended for people interested in leadership positions in the church. An optional potluck dinner at 6 p.m. with optional worship (7 p.m.) and programs (7:30 p.m.). Call for schedule. Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

Images of the Divine Art Show Twenty local artists present their own interpretations of "the sacred" and "the divine" in a variety of media. Sat., May 9, 5-9 p.m. Hillcrest Congregational Church, 404 Gregory Ln., Pleasant Hill. 925-689-4[illegible].

Interfaith Prayers for [illegible] With Personal Dream Patterns. All are welcome. First Wednesday of every month, 7 p.m., free. Center of Light Oakland, 3044 79th Ave., Oakland. [illegible]

LGBT Meditation Group Vipassana Dream [illegible] practice. [illegible] Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., free. East Bay Meditation Center, 2147 Broadway Ave., Oakland. 510-268-0696. EastBayMeditation.org.

Berkeley [illegible] Meditation With [illegible]. Mondays, 7 p.m. Chestnut House, 2215 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-8687. Chestnut.org.

[illegible] Sunday Speakers Guest speakers every week. Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., free. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

Silent Meditation The Tibetan bell is rung at 12:20 p.m., calling for silence, and rung again at 12:40 p.m. to end it. Wednesdays, Thursdays, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

Thursday Evening Core Curriculum Programs Exploring Unitarian Universalist theology, first Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Exploring Prayer and Spiritual Practice for Unitarian Universalists, second Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Exploring Unitarian Universalist Heritage and Tradition, third Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Exploring World Religions, fourth Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Exploring Theological Perspectives, fifth Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Thursdays. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

Thursday Berkeley Deepening Practice Meditation With Mari Gates and Jeffrey Kessler. Thursdays, 7 p.m. Chestnut House, 2215 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-8687. Chestnut.org.

YOGA & BODYWORK

InterPlay as a Life Practice Cynthia Winton-Henry and other leaders lead an ongoing class on moving, breathing, improvising, and playing. Fridays, 10-11:30 a.m. $10-$15. InterPlayce, 2273 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-465-2797. InterPlay.org.

Tai Chi, Meditation, and Qigong With Jeffrey Kessler. Thursdays, 8 p.m. $50-$70 per month. Chestnut House, 2215 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-8687. Chestnut.org. ●

PICKS

Buddhism and the Scientific Method

We've heard all about the battle between creationism and Darwin's theory of evolution. But where do Buddhists stand on this matter? At the **Nyingma Institute** (1815 Highland Pl., Berkeley) on Sunday, May 10, Buddhist teacher Jack Petranker addresses the fruitful alliances and potential conflicts between **Buddhism and the scientific method.** 4 p.m., free. NyingmaInstitute.com *— Anneli Rufus*

Japanese Tea Ceremony

The **Japanese tea ceremony** is a centuries-old tradition that engages spiritual, aesthetic, and [illegible] all at once. At **Trax Ceramics Gallery** (1812 Fifth St., Berkeley) on Saturday, May 9, Marc Lancet and Masakazu Kusakabe-san conduct the ceremony to celebrate the opening of an exhibition of their pots. Ikebana specialist Hedi Desuyo demonstrates flower arranging. Reservations required: e-mail info@traxgallery.com. 5 p.m. TraxGallery.com *— A.R.*

Pagan Festival

Pagan Festival

Let your pride take flight at this year's **Pagan Festival**, which begins with a Pagan Pride parade that leads to **Civic Center Park** (Martin Luther King Jr. Way between Center St. and Allston Way, Berkeley) on Saturday, May 9. Live performances onstage augment rituals, altars, a storytelling pavilion, an arts-and-crafts pavilion, and more. Should be! 11 a.m.-5 p.m., free. ThePaganAlliance.org *— A.R.*

Raw Food Class

Tabouleh without wheat. Hummus without beans. Unfried falafel balls. Unbaked baklava. A **raw-food preparation class** focusing on Mediterranean classics at **Whole Foods** (3000 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley) on Friday, May 8, explores clever strategies such as slicing zucchini really small to create faux "rice." 6 p.m., $35. RawFairy.com *— A.R.*

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AQUARIUM AGE

BACKUP YOUR COMPUTERS, IT'S RETROGRADE TIME

For the week of May 6-12, 2009

By Rafiee Finn

Nothing is moving quickly this week, or for the next couple of weeks, so if you are looking for a speedy anything or want instant returns or gratifications of any kind, you'll need to travel to a parallel universe. The planets have a pace of their own and attempting to force this natural rhythm will only result in frustration. So rather than wasting time or energy resisting or insisting that daily life be anything other than it is, take a deep breath, exhale, and do your best to adjust to the astral pulse. While the deceleration may feel awkward at first, within a couple of days, you'll be wondering why you were so intent on pushing so hard.

The source of this slowdown is Mercury Retrograde. From May 7 to May 30, Mercury is in its second retrograde phase of the year. For those of you unfamiliar with Mercury Retrograde, here's the skinny: Mercury represents all things related to communication and travel. Three times a year it appears, at least from our perspective on Earth, to move in reverse. And during those retrograde phases, all things within its vast domain also seem to move behind rather than ahead. Phones of every ilk, documents of every dimension, and mail of every denomination fail to perform to perfection, which means messages vanish into the void.

Computer crashes are probable under a Mercury Retrograde, so be sure to have a backup plan, especially if you aren't backed up. Same with travel plans. Try to solidify your arrangements before the retrograde. And during the retrograde, be prepared for delays and detours. While Mercury Retrograde is not a good time to initiate anything new, it is an excellent time to review, refine, and reconsider anything already in motion.

Given the reflective nature of Mercury Retrograde, the next few weeks would be a good to time to contemplate the state of the nation from a personal as well as a collective perspective. The first few months of 2009 have been months of significant shift. Although its immediate hold has lessened, we are still in the grip of the Saturn/Uranus opposition, a configuration that symbolizes confrontations to the status quo. Saturn signifies structures; Uranus, revolution, and when they oppose one another, certain facets of society tend to tumble. Just as an example, the last time we experienced an opposition between Saturn and Uranus was in 1965 to 1967, a time of tremendous social upheaval, when social mores disintegrated in a cultural revolution that was undeniable. We are in just such a stage now. And just as consciousness was the cutting edge of change during the Sixties, during the current cycle, consciousness continues to be the cutting edge of change.

As Mercury Retrograde unfolds, instead of devolving into frustration or anxiety about the technological failures or traffic jams, contemplate what current cultural mores are in the process of disintegration. We are living through a paradigm shift, and the more we can see what's occurring through a broad perspective, the easier it will be to adjust to the changes.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon Sign, read that too.

ARIES Mercury reviews your finances, and while you may feel as if you've done as much as possible to improve your situation, there is still room for adjustment. Use this time to your benefit, and you'll be pleased with the outcome.

TAURUS Mercury focuses on your public persona. Contemplate what you would like your image to be, and then spend time figuring out what the necessary steps are to effectuate the changes you desire.

GEMINI Mercury takes you into the altered states of the dreamtime, and while certain perceptions of reality may be disconcerting, if you relax and allow the journey to unfold, you'll garner valuable self awareness.

CANCER Friends from the past appear in present time, and while some are welcome, other encounters may not be pleasant. Keep healthy boundaries and you'll sort through this process with skill.

LEO Mercury focuses on career, but is interested more in partnerships than résumés. Stay open to the possibility of alliances, and you could find yourself solidifying a solid, beneficial relationship.

VIRGO Mercury urges you to think about what really matters to you, and why. Embrace this process, even if it is uncomfortable. Knowing what you value will ultimately help you make authentic decisions.

LIBRA Mercury probes financial issues, especially shared finances with partners, personal and professional. Make an honest assessment of the situation, and there won't be any trouble reconciling the "books."

SCORPIO Mercury encourages social interaction with a wide variety of people. Whether it's friends, lovers, business associates, family members, or strangers, stay open to the possibility of thoughtful conversation and connection.

SAGITTARIUS Mercury is all details, which means you may find yourself revising what you thought was already finished and complete. Stay open to making necessary changes and you'll improve what's already perfect.

CAPRICORN Mercury might push you into taking chances in uncharted territory. But given the uncertainty of the times, it might be wiser to limit your leaps of faith to creative choices rather than financial ones.

AQUARIUS Mercury wants to hunker down at home, and so do you. Give into the idea of hibernation, and instead of accepting an invitation, just say "no." Honor your instinct for rest and renewal, and you'll emerge from the retrograde refreshed.

PISCES Mercury gets chatty and, as a result, so do you, talking up a storm. And while nonstop conversation may feel strange at first, you are likely to find very interesting people who are just as eager to engage in conversation with you as you are with them. ■

For More Info

Rafiee Finn specializes in Transformational Astrology. For readings, call 1-888-937-5264, write P.O. Box 343, New York, NY 10025, visit AquariumAge.com, or e-mail Rafiee@AquariumAge.com. Copyright © 2009 by Rafiee Finn.

FOOD & DRINK

RAW TALENT

Raw Energy's offerings aren't hot — but that's cool

By Anneli Rufus

You know how sometimes you're dead set against something, blindly biased, without ever even trying it? Granted, it's usually something you would never dream of trying anyway. But sometimes this would-be monstrosity is exactly what logic — or demographics, or strangers you meet at parties — say you should love. Famous last words: You'd love this! Maybe that's why you shun it.

For me it was raw food. Not your casual apple or salad, but raw food as a regimen, in which nothing is cooked, not even entrées, and faux versions of familiar classics are fashioned from raw ingredients: "Salmon" comprising puréed carrots, almonds, onion, lemon juice, kelp, and liquid amino acids. "Refried" "beans" comprising sprouted rye, chopped apple, chili, garlic, salt, and cumin. "Cupcakes" comprising cocoa powder, walnuts, dates, coconut oil, and salt processed and pressed into colorful fluted paper cups. "Spaghetti" and "rice" that reveal themselves, as in a nightmare, to be zucchini slivered and chopped.

For years, I used to shudder just thinking about the raw-food movement, which is based largely on the notion that digestion-enhancing enzymes are released when raw food is chewed, but destroyed in food heated over 116 degrees, and that a cooked diet makes bodies constipated, sick, and fat. As a native Californian who turned vegetarian twenty years ago, I should welcome such ideas for more reasons than one. So why would I shudder when, after all, raw-foodism has been championed by such notables as Mel Gibson, Uma Thurman, Woody Harrelson, James Brolin, Demi Moore, and Jason Mraz? Well, maybe that's why.

Raw food, I always thought, is what you eat while waiting for actual food, tapping your feet.

So ordering the "pizza" at Raw Energy, I smirked. Ditto tomato "soup." Ordering nut milks, not as much, because they're meant to be consumed cold. Tofu and hummus sandwiches, on vegan (but baked) bread, are listed on the menu as "semi-cooked foods." To dip into the soup, I bought a packet of Italian Flax Crackers. Devised by owner Majid Naini, they're made with flaxseeds, tomatoes, grapes, garlic, basil, oregano, rosemary, and thyme.

Because Raw Energy has no inside seating and just one tiny outdoor table — the food is prepared mostly to order inside a tiny kitchen and served through a window by Naini and his wife and son — it is virtually a takeout-only operation. So I smirked all the way to the bus stop, throughout the bus ride, and while setting the table at home. But then ...

In its little paper box, the pizza looks so self-effacing. If food could shuffle its feet and avoid eye contact, this would. Naini makes the crust by sprouting wheat berries for three days, then dehydrating them for another eighteen hours. He tops the crust with layers of avocado, alfalfa sprouts, julienned red cabbage, carrot ribbons, tahini, and vegan Parmesan "cheese." Suddenly it releases an explosion of textures: first, snappy-crunchy from the vegetables. Then supersoft, from the exquisitely ripe avocado. Then crumbly-comforting from the "cheese" and crust, which resembles graham cracker crust. This barrage of surprises is still rapid-firing as the flavors register: Sweet. Earthy. Creamy. Bright. Two inches tall, this is a pizza in name only, but we'll excuse that because it is also a revelation. It is luxuriant, its carrots and cabbage forgivable because they are so fresh and cut so small, not in-your-face crisp like a challenge the way produce is too often served.

Raw Energy
2050 Addison St., Berkeley
510-665-9464, RawEnergy.net
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m.-7 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Cash, Visa, Discover, MasterCard, American Express

Sample Menu

Raw Pizza	$7
Soup	$3 (small) $4 (large)
Italian Flax Crackers	$3
Tofu Sandwich	$4.75
Nut Milk	$5.50
Smoothies	$6.50

The raw pizza and two drinks. Chris Duffey

How is raw tomato soup not tomato juice? It's thicker, almost thick enough to stand a spoon in. It's served slightly warm. Raw-onion shards wash up in each spoonful like pearls. Sunset-red, sparkily spiced, it sparks the thought: You can't even tell this is uncooked! To this archaic mind, that is a compliment.

The instant the cracker meets the tongue, it zings. Sprouted for one day and dehydrated for three, Naini's crackers are crunchy on the verge of brittle, fruity on the verge of savory.

Naini's nut milks, made with powdered walnuts and flavored with your choice of vanilla, carob, strawberry (the seeds crunch jauntily between your teeth), or orange, are drinks on the verge of entrées (because they're high-protein) and desserts. His vegetable drinks (think beets, chard, kale, celery, and parsley) and his smoothies, made with just fruit — peaches, dates, berries, and watermelon, but no frozen yogurt — are on the verge of palate cleansers.

The half-inch-high tomato slab and the mouthfuls of alfalfa sprouts in the sandwiches are extras so substantial and assertive that they verge on being main ingredients.

The raw meal that you feared would not be filling is. Is this the deal with raw food? Things on the verge of their apparent opposites? Flavors, textures, and concepts poised on cusps? A realm of slowly, dizzyingly expanding subtleties that stun you into sitting ramrod-straight, voraciously alert? Does raw food make this happen chemically, or do we just believe it should, so when we eat raw food it kind of does? In any case, enzymes aside, we're so accustomed to sugar, emulsifiers, processing, and cooking that we've forgotten the true flavors, colors, and textures of our favorite foods — if we even ever knew them at all.

With its dense slab of honey-sesame bean curd, the tofu sandwich verges on a burger. But the hummus sandwich verges on a rip-off, its abundant lettuce, sprouts, and tomato slice far outweighing a tasty but scanty smear of chickpea paste, spread so thin as to be a condiment. This was the only downside of several visits.

Granted, raw food can be costly. Pancake-batter thick, the nut milks look and almost taste like shakes, but because they're nutritious you can easily imagine drinking one or more a day. But because they run between $5.50 and $6 each, drinking one feels a bit like drinking liquid platinum, not just because it tastes as good but because your mind, like a cash register, rings up every sip.

And yet you want it. Beginning an orange nut milk — is there any fruit that doesn't lend itself to nuts? — I'm asking why we even require any other food. I have stopped shuddering. The joke's on me. ■

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RESTAURANTS & CAFES

This guide only lists restaurants recommended by Express food writers. You can find complete reviews for all of these restaurants at EastBayExpress.com. Our print listings rotate regularly, as space allows. Our complete Dining Guide is available online, where it is searchable by neighborhood, cuisine, price and more. Price codes indicate the cost of a single meal: course and beverage, share appetizers and desserts and tip adequately. $—up to $10 per person $$—$10-$25 $$$—$25-$50 $$$$—more than $50.

RICHMOND & NORTH

El Chalan 5 41 San Pablo Dam Rd., El Sobrante, 510-223-4300 (Salvadoran/Peruvian/South American) $$

Daimo Chinese Restaurant 3288A Pierce St. at the Pacific East Mall, Richmond, 510-527-3888 (Chinese/Seafood) $-$$$

The Dead Fish 20050 San Pablo Ave., Crockett, 510-787-3035, (American/Seafood) $$$-$$$$

[illegible] Cafe 105 Park Pl., Richmond, 510-984-4711 (American/California Cuisine) $$

Nadeno 3883 San Pablo Dam Rd., El Sobrante, 510-223-8011 (Central American) $

Katana-Ya Ramen 11544-11546 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-528-1978, (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$

Oh Yes Thai 12980 San Pablo Ave., Richmond, 510-237-6273 (Vietnamese) $-$$

Ristorante Due Rose 1550 Fitzgerald Dr., Pinole, 510-223-5420 (Italian) $$

[illegible] and Thai Restaurant 12200 San Pablo Ave., Richmond, 510-235-0540 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

ALBANY, KENSINGTON & BERKELEY-SOLANO

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 1591 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-526-8185, (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Bua Luang 1166 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-527-8288, (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $

Cactus Taqueria 1881 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-528-1881, (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $

Café Raj 1158 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-524-5467 (Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

China Village 1335 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-525-2285, (Chinese) $-$$

Christopher's Nothing Fancy Cafe 1019 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-526-3185 (Mexican) Christopher's $-$$

Fonda 1501A Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-559-9006, (Mexican/Nuevo Latino/Organic/Sustainable/South American/Tapas/Small Plates) $$-$$$

Kensington Circus Pub 389 Colusa Ave., Kensington, 510-524-8814, (English/Irish) $$

[illegible] Pub 1046 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-528-3875, (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $$

[illegible] 945 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-558-8494, (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner/Organic/Sustainable) $$

Vanessa's Bistro 1715 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-525-8300 (Tapas/Small Plates/Vietnamese) $$

Full Reviews Online

About 500 reviews searchable by food region and price at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

BERKELEY-NORTH

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 1600 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-849-2827 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Cafe Gratitude 1730 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 415-824-4652 (Organic/Sustainable/Vegetarian/Vegan) $$

[illegible] 1505 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Bakery, Pizzeria) $

[illegible] Restaurant 1548 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1460 (Mexican) $-$$

Cha-Am 1543 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-9664 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

Chez Panisse 1517 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-5525 Restaurant 510-548-5049 cafe (California Cuisine/French/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$$

Gioia Pizzeria 1586 Hopkins St., Berkeley, 510-528-4692 (Organic/Sustainable/Pizza) $

Saul's Restaurant and Delicatessen 1475 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-848-3354 (Deli/Kosher/Natural/Organic/Sustainable) $$

BERKELEY-DOWNTOWN

Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen 2261 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-548-6900, (Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

[illegible] 1849 [illegible] Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2555 (California Cuisine/French, Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

Cafe Thai 2020 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-5553 (Russian) $-$$

Downtown Bar and Restaurant 2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-649-3810 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Seafood/Tapas/Small Plates) $$-$$$

Jupiter 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-8277 (Brewpub/Pizza) $$

Oscar's 1890 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2384 (American/Diner) $

Platano 2347 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-0635 (Central American) $-$$

Plearn 2050 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-2148 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $$

Pomegranate 1500 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible] (Middle Eastern) $$

Razan's Organic Kitchen 2119 Kittredge St., Berkeley, 510-486-5449 (Middle Eastern, Organic/Sustainable/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Tuk Tuk Thai Cafe 2466-2468 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-8600 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$

Udupi Palace 1901 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-6600 (Indian/Pakistani/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Zatar 1981 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-1981 (California Cuisine/Greek/Turkish/Middle Eastern/Organic/Sustainable/Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates) $$-$$$

BERKELEY-WEST & EMERYVILLE

Bette's Oceanview Diner 1807 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-3230 (American/Diner/Organic/Sustainable) $$

Brennan's Restaurant 720 University Ave., Berkeley 510-841-0960 (American) $

Cafe Fanny 1603 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-524-5447 (Cafe/Coffeehouse/California Cuisine/French/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$

[illegible] 1233 65th St., Emeryville, 510-[illegible] (Mexican) $$

Eccolo 1820 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-0444 (California Cuisine/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

Jimmy Bean's 1290 Sixth St., Berkeley, 510-528-3435 (Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

Kabana 1106 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-3355 (Indian/Pakistani/Kosher/Halal) $

[illegible] Bar-B-Que 2013 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1140 (Barbecue) $-$$

O Chame 1830 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-841-8783 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine/Japanese/Sushi/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

Picante 1328 Sixth St., Berkeley, 510-525-3121 (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $

Rudy's Can't Fail Cafe 4081 Hollis St., Emeryville, 510-594-1221 (American/Diner) $-$$

[illegible] 3627 San Pablo Ave., Emeryville 510-841-9238 (Southern/Soul Food) $$

Tacubaya 1788 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-525-5160 (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

Vik's 726 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-644-4412 (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $

BERKELEY-SOUTH

Andy and Cindy's Thai Kitchen Tuesday Berkeley Farmers' Market, Derby St. at Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, 510-548-3333 (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Finfine 2556 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-0601 (African/Ethiopian/Tribal) $$

Holy Land 2965 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-1672 (Middle Eastern) $

Homemade Cafe 2454 Sacramento St., Berkeley, 510-845-1940 (American/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $

[illegible] 2977 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-7536 (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$

[illegible] Indian Kitchen 2449 Sacramento St., Berkeley, 510-841-6110, (Indian/Pakistani) $

[illegible] 2508 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1274 (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Rick & Ann's Restaurant and Catering 2922 Domingo Ave., Berkeley, 510-649-8538 (American/Breakfast/Brunch) $$

Shen Hua 2914 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-883-1777 (Chinese) $-$$

Smokehouse 3115 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-3640 (American) $

[illegible] 2533 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8888, (Asian Fusion/Chinese/Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $$

OAKLAND-ROCKRIDGE

À Côté 5478 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-6469 (California Cuisine/French/Italian, Organic/Tapas/Small Plates) $$$

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 5819 College Ave., Oakland, 510-601-0444 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Cactus Taqueria 5642 College Ave., Oakland, 510-658-6180 (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $

[illegible] 5484 College Ave., Oakland, 510-653-5454 (Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine/French) $$-$$$$

[illegible] of India 5211 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-658-7451 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

[illegible] 6045 College Ave., Oakland, 510-655-3298 (Southeast Asian) $$

Oliveto 5655 College Ave., Oakland, 510-547-5356 (Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

[illegible] 5422 College Ave., Oakland, 510-654-8501 (Italian/Pizza) $-$$

OAKLAND-TEMESCAL

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Sunday Temescal Farmers Market, Oakland, 415-412-0102 (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Doña Tomás 5004 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-450-0522 (Mexican) $$$

Kang Tong Gol 3702 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-658-2591 (Korean) $$

[illegible] Charcoal Barbecue 4390 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-652-6007 (Korean) $$

Mama's Royal Cafe 4012 Broadway, Oakland, 510-547-7600 (American/Breakfast/Brunch) $

[illegible] Cafe 4600 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, 510-595-5344 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $

Pyung Chang Tofu House 4701 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-658-9040 (Korean/Southeast Asian) $$

S&S Seafood 4923 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-654-8584 (Seafood/Southern/Soul Food) $

Seafood Barbeque House 2000 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-834-5101 (Korean) $-$$

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KOZI MILAGU CHETTINAD: Boneless chicken cooked in a sauce made with tomatoes, onions, yogurt, garlic, black pepper powder, [illegible], cloves, cinnamon and cardamom. (Tamilnadu)

SABZI RANGARANG: Cauliflower, green beans, broccoli, carrots and peas, simmered in a sauce made with onions, tomatoes, garlic, ginger, lime juice, cilantro, dill and spices. (Hindi) (Vegan)

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RECENTLY REVIEWED

Smokey Blues Bar-Be-Que

5415 [illegible] Ave., Oakland, 510-350-8[illegible]. Big, meaty ribs with plenty of slow-cooked smoky flavor are served at this friendly rough-around-the-edges barbecue joint. But there's more to the place than that: plump, juicy sausage links in crackly casings; tender, spicy black-eyed peas; bright, earthy collard greens; the best red beans and rice this side of Canal Street; warm, sweet muffins ribboned with cornmeal. Minimal wine and beer list. $$

Beta Lounge

2 2017 [illegible] Ave., Berkeley 510-843-3500. This sleek little wine bar boasts an ambient conviviality that belies its proto-IKEA design scheme. The brief and inexpensive wine list is supplemented with beer and an interesting menu of sake cocktails, as well as a dozen or so largely satisfying noshes: filled-to-bursting spring rolls with raw nut peanut dipping sauce; a platter of artisan cheeses with fresh fruit and baguette; sandwiches of roasted turkey and ripe avocado on warm focaccia, honey slabs of ciabatta pizza topped with mozzarella, roasted peppers, and eggplant. Ciao Bella gelato in three varieties is available for dessert. $$

San Francisco Soup Company

2[illegible] Bancroft Way, Berkeley 510-848-7687; 1300 Clay St., Oakland, 510-763-7687. The San Francisco Soup Company is many things it's not supposed to be. Soup — to go. And soup, which is hot and wet and must be consumed by careful spoonfuls while sitting or at least standing still — as fast food. But it works. The East Bay restaurants in this rapidly increasing chain serve delicious soups from an ever-shifting menu of more than eighty varieties, including many organic, low-carb, and gluten-free versions, and many incorporating all-organic ingredients. San Francisco Soup Company's salads and wraps are not to be overlooked either. The wraps especially are almost big enough to comprise two meals each, and the Rainbow Wrap is a sheer delight with candied walnuts, organic greens, and roasted beets. $

Cioccolato Di Vino

1801 Shattuck Ave., Suite C, Berkeley, 510-868-1393. This combination wine bar, antipasti joint, and sweets emporium succeeds on all levels. The wine list is thoughtful and eclectic; the small plates are creative and delectable and the desserts, for the most part, are out of this world. Try the goat cheese tartlet, the grilled eggplant rolls with prosciutto and mozzarella, the ricotta-orange nest pie, and anything involving chocolate, especially the palmier cake and the chocolate chip cookies. Elegant yet friendly old-world atmosphere. $$

Oyster Reef

100 Embarcadero, Oakland, 510-836-2519. Perched behind a motel parking lot over the Oakland estuary, this casual, low-slung seafood house has more to offer than you might expect: patio dining, waterfront vistas, a rollicking live music scene, and food that occasionally transcends the perfunctory chowder-and-calamari menu. Freshly caught fish is expertly grilled, broiled, or blackened, the linguine with fresh clams is rich and garlicky, the walnut-studded brownie is a decadent, delectable dream. Although the gloppy clam chowder is best avoided, the bright, refreshing mango mojito makes an ideal meal-opener. $$$

Best Burritos

10795 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-524-8[illegible]. A certified chef in her native Korea, owner Won Eon bought a burrito shop after arriving in America and immediately began to experiment. Asian and Asian-American customers craved Asian flavors in convenient comfort-food shapes. Eon followed their advice. Thus the menu includes tofu burritos and teriyaki/bulgoki burritos along with standard Mexican varieties. All burritos here start with a large tortilla, onto which are spooned rice, boiled beans, chunky house-made salsa, and julienned lettuce and onion. The other fillings are cooked to order and poured atop the rest to create a gigantic, satisfying surprise. $

Angel Fish 1813 Island Dr., Suite C-2, Alameda, 510-749-0408 (Sushi) $-$$
Asena 2508 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda 510-521-4879 (California Cuisine/Greek/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$
[illegible] 2307 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-5810 (California Cuisine) $$
[illegible] [illegible] Encinal Ave., Alameda 510-769-[illegible] (Diner) $
Dragon Rouge 2314 Encinal Ave., Alameda, 510-521-[illegible] (Vietnamese) $-$$
[illegible] [illegible] Park St., Alameda, 510-[illegible] (Cuban) $$
[illegible] 2319-A Encinal Ave., Alameda, 510-814-0178 (American/Breakfast/Brunch/California Cuisine) $-$$
Yume Sushi 1428 Park St., Alameda, 510-865-7348 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

OAKLAND EAST

El [illegible] 4806 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-261-8896 (Mexican) $-$$
El Huarache Azteca 3842 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-533-2395 (Mexican) $
El Ojo de Agua 3132 E. 12th St., Oakland, (Mexican) $
[illegible] 8217 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-430-8771 (Southeast Asian/Thai/Burmese) $-$$
Otaez Mexicatessen 3872 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-536-0909 (Mexican) $-$$
Phu An Son 2917 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-878-6621 (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $
Southern Cafe 2000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-261-1414 (Southern/Soul Food) $$
Tacos El Sol Corner of International Blvd. and 36th St., Oakland, no phone, (Mexican) $
Taqueria San Jose 3433 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-533-5748 (Mexican) $

HAYWARD & SAN LEANDRO

A Street Cafe 1213 A St., Hayward, 510-

[illegible] [illegible] Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-581-[illegible] (Korean) $
[illegible] Pie & Poppy's Authentic Southern Cuisine 5319 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (at 53rd St.), Oakland, 510-547-8743, (Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

OAKLAND-PIEDMONT, GRAND LAKE & EAST

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Saturday Grand Lake Farmers Market, Oakland, 415-412-0100. (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $
Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 4162 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-655-7180 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $
Bay Wolf Restaurant 3853 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-655-6004 (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$
[illegible] 4390 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-45[illegible] (California Dining) $$$-$$$$
[illegible] 4253 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible] (Italian/Organic) $-$$
Holy Land 677 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-272-0535, (Kosher/Halal/Middle Eastern) $
Spettro 3355 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-451-1130 (Bohemian/Italian/Pizza) $$
Tropix 3814 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-653-2444 (Caribbean) $$
Zza's Gourmet 552 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-839-9124 (Italian/Pizza) $$

OAKLAND-DOWNTOWN & JACK LONDON SQ.

B Oakland 499 9th St., Oakland, 510-251-8770 (California Cuisine/Organic) $$
La Internacional Mexicatessen 502 Seventh St., Oakland, 510-444-9994 (Mexican) $-$$
Chef Lau's 301 8th St., Oakland, 510-835-3288 (Chinese/Seafood) $
[illegible] Oakland 310 Broadway, Oakland 510-452-4206 (Peruvian/South American) $$
[illegible] 368 9th St. (Pacific Renaissance Plaza, 1st Floor), Oakland, 510-268-1288 (Chinese) $
Home of Chicken & Waffles 444 Embarcadero, Oakland, 510-836-4446 (American/Southern/Soul Food) $
[illegible] Oakland Restaurant and Cabaret 981 Washington St., Oakland, 510-981-1501 (Cajun/Seafood/Soul Food) $$
Shanghai Restaurant 930 Webster St., Oakland, 510-465-6878 (Chinese) $-$$
Yoshi's 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-238-9200 (Japanese/Sushi) $$$

ALAMEDA

[illegible] 1544 [illegible] St., Alameda, 510-523-2000 (Italian) $$$

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Tamarindo
The Hobnob
Tropix Caribbean Restaurant
Venezia
Venus
Viva Voce Café
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Zza's Trattoria

Vital Life Services extends a warm and heartfelt thank you to the fabulous restaurants who participated in Dining Out for Life 2009! We encourage everyone to dine out at these amazing restaurants all year long to support their generous contribution to the community. More information about these restaurants can be found at *www.DiningOutForLife.com/EastBay*

Thank you!

R&C

582-2536. (French) $$$

[illegible] Italian Market 29102 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-270-7339. (Italian) $-$$

Mission Hill's Bakery 1102 B St., Hayward, 510-886-5827. (American/Breakfast) $

[illegible] 25036 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, 510-[illegible]. (Chinese) $$

[illegible] Restaurant and Pho 2637 Castro Valley Blvd., Castro Valley, 510-886-6822. (Chinese) $

[illegible] 742 B St., Hayward, 510-886-9744. (California Cuisine/Seafood) $$$

FREMONT NEWARK & UNION CITY

Cafe [illegible] 46807 Warm Springs Blvd., Fremont, 510-[illegible]. (Chinese) $$-$$$

Lovely Market and Snacks 41031 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-657-1412. (Bakery/Indian/Pakistani) $

[illegible] Grill 39258 Paseo Padre Pkwy., Fremont, 510-797-7780. (Chinese/Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

Massimo's 5200 Mowry Ave., Fremont, 510-792-2000. (California Cuisine/Italian) $$$

Udupi Palace 5988 New Park Mall Rd., Newark, 510-794-8400. (Indian/Pakistani/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Woodlands 39203 Cedar Blvd., Newark, 510-494-9727. (Indian/Pakistani) $

PLEASANT HILL, CONCORD & EAST

[illegible] 4315G Clayton Rd., Concord, 925-680-0758. (Peruvian/South American) $-$$

[illegible] Kabob 7460 Monument Blvd., Concord, 925-680-5488. (Afghan/Persian) $

Nora's Gyros and Hot Dogs 248 Golf Club Rd., Pleasant Hill, 925-687-8454. (Greek/Turkish) $

Left Bank Brasserie 60 Crescent Dr., Pleasant Hill, 925-288-1222. (French/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

Mac's Old House 3100 E. 18th St., Antioch, 925-757-9003. (American/Italian/Seafood/Steak House) $-$$

[illegible] 2118 Mount Diablo St., Concord, 925-[illegible]. (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $$

WALNUT CREEK

[illegible] Grill & Restaurant 1475 Newell Ave., Walnut Creek, 925-[illegible]-0770. (Eastern European) $$

[illegible] 342 Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek, 925-938-2464. (American/Steak House) $$$$

Kevmo 1516 Bonanza St., Walnut Creek, 925-938-4355. (California Cuisine/[illegible]) $$

Lark Creek Walnut Creek 1360 Locust St., Walnut Creek, 925-256-1234. (American/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$-$$$

Tai's Tea House 1620 Mount Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek, 925-287-[illegible]. (Chinese) $$-$$$

Va de Vi Bistro & Wine Bar 1511 Mount Diablo Blvd., Walnut Creek, 925-979-0100. (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Tapas/Small Plates/Wine Bar) $$-$$$

Vic Stewart's 850 South Broadway, Walnut Creek, 925-943-5666. (Steak House) $$$-$$$$

Walnut Creek Yacht Club 1555 Bonanza St., Walnut Creek, 925-944-FISH. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable/Seafood) $$-$$$

LAMORINDA

[illegible] Cafe 2 Theatre Sq., Suite 115, Orinda, 925-254-5285. (Greek/Turkish/Middle Eastern) $

Bo's Barbecue 3422 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-7133. (Barbecue/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$

Chow Orinda 20 Bryant Way, Orinda, 925-254-2981. (American/Steak House) $$-$$$

Chow 53 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette, 925-962-2469. (American/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$

El Jarro Mexican Cafe 3540 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-6070. (Mexican) $-$$

La Piccola Ristorante 100 Lafayette Circle, Suite 101, Lafayette, 925-284-5092. (Italian) $$-$$$

Postino 3565 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-299-8700. (California Cuisine/Italian/Organic/Sustainable) $$$

[illegible] Cafe 1012 School St., Moraga, 925-376-1127. (American) $-$$

TRI-VALLEY

[illegible] Grill 1998-A Market Pl., San Ramon, 925-[illegible]. (Hawaiian) $

Masala Indian Fusion 400 San Ramon Valley Blvd., Danville, 925-307-4900. (Indian/Pakistani) $$

McNamara's Steak & Chop House 7400 San Ramon Rd., Dublin, 925-833-0995. (American/Seafood/Steak House) $$$

The Patio 800 Moraga Rd., Lafayette, 925-[illegible]. (South American/Tapas/Small Plates) $$

Roderick's BBQ and [illegible] 5801 [illegible], Pleasanton, 925-251-8611. (Barbecue/Seafood/Southern/Soul Food) $$

[illegible] 500 Bollinger Canyon Way (in the Canyon Lakes Mall), San Ramon, 925-[illegible]. (Italian) $$-$$$

Taqueria El Balazo 250 Market Pl., San Ramon, 925-328-0581. (Mexican) $

Wente Vineyards Restaurant 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore, 925-456-2450. (California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$$$

[illegible] 3495 Blackhawk Plaza Circle, Danville, 925-964-1866. (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

[illegible] Mother's Day Plant Sale and Barbecue [illegible] annual vegetables, annual and perennial herbs and flowers, culinary and tea herbs, fruit, and heritage tomato plants. For info, visit [illegible]. May 9-10, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Martin Luther King Auditorium, 1781 Rose St. (at [illegible] King Middle School), Berkeley. 510-644-6290.

[illegible] Chocolates Factory Tour [illegible] to watch chocolate in production, followed by a Q&A. Wednesdays, Saturdays, 11:30 a.m. & 2:30 p.m. Free. [illegible] Chocolates Factory Store and Chocolate Bar, 1529 Horton St., Emeryville, 510-652-4412. CharlesChocolates.com.

[illegible] The Unity Council presents fresh produce and live salsa performances. First Thursday of every month, 5-8 p.m. Free. Fruitvale Village, 3401 E. 12th St. (at Fruitvale BART), Oakland. 510-535-6900. UnityCouncil.org.

Scharffen Berger Chocolate Maker Factory Tours [illegible] private samplings and a history of chocolate. Call 510-981-4066 to make reservations. Daily. Free. Scharffen Berger, 914 Heinz Ave., Berkeley. ScharffenBerger.com.

Wine Wednesdays Complimentary wine [illegible] and wine by the glass for only $5. Second Wednesday of every month, 5-7 p.m. Continues through Dec. 31. [illegible] Cellars & Gallery, 5400 Hollis St. (Ste. B), Emeryville, 510-655-7627. [illegible]Cellars.com.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Bayfair Center Farmers' Market Fresh produce [illegible] by local organic and specialty farmers. Saturdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Bayfair Center, 15555 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-[illegible]. ShopBayfair.com.

Farm Fresh [illegible] Produce [illegible] Farm Fresh Choice runs produce stands in [illegible] neighborhoods. Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m. 510-848-1704, [illegible] Community Center, 2600 Park St., Berkeley, 510-981-5030. [illegible].

Kensington Farmers' Market With a mix of fresh flowers, an organic chocolatier, [illegible] products, fresh wild fish, fruits and vegetables, nuts, butters, bread, [illegible] fresh pasta, and seasonal [illegible] Sundays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. [illegible] Parking Lot, 303 Arlington Ave., Berkeley.

[illegible] Farmers' Market Sponsored by [illegible] [illegible] nutritional awareness, access to healthy [illegible] and the connections between people and our planet. The [illegible] includes certified organic produce from J&P Organic Farm based out of Salinas, CA and a [illegible] prepared food booth called the Purple Lawn Cafe. For more info or to find out how to include produce [illegible] Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [illegible] Laurel [illegible], Oakland. 510-[illegible].

Marin Costa Certified Farmers' Market With vendors selling fresh produce, [illegible] nuts, dried fruit, and gourmet Indian or Afghan food. For information: call 925-2263827 or visit [illegible]. Starting May 10, Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Continues through Oct. 1. Free. Main St., Martinez. [illegible].

North Oakland Farmers' Market [illegible] organic [illegible] and [illegible] for sale, plus special programs and events. Thursdays, 3-7 p.m. Free. [illegible] and [illegible] 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. [illegible] Ave. at Ruga St., Berkeley.

Pacific Coast Farmers' Market [illegible] market featuring vendors with fresh produce, flowers, and crafts for sale. For info, visit PCFMA.com. Starting May 7, Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Continues through Nov. 19. Free. Court St. [illegible] [illegible] and Escobar Sts., [illegible].

[illegible] Farmers' Market [illegible] fruit and vegetables, plus Tri-Valley [illegible] and dog [illegible]. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. [illegible] Farmers' Market, West Angela St. (at First St.), Pleasanton.

Saturday Berkeley Farmers' Market Fresh and organic produce, [illegible] specialty foods, and more for sale, plus educational programs and events. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. [illegible] Civic Center Park, 2151 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (between [illegible] and Center Sts.), Berkeley, 510-[illegible].

Temescal Farmers' Market California certified farmers offer seasonal produce, dried fruits and nuts, fresh ranch eggs, baked goods, locally caught fish, [illegible] flowers, and more. Info: 510-745-7100. Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. DMV Parking Lot, 5300 Claremont Ave., Oakland.

Tuesday Berkeley Farmers' Market Fresh and organic produce, breads, [illegible] [illegible] and more for sale, plus special programs and events. Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m. Free. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. Derby St. (at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley.

PICK

Ruth Reichl

In her bestselling memoirs *Comfort Me with Apples*, *Tender at the Bone*, and *Garlic & Sapphires*, noted food writer **Ruth Reichl** detailed her life and work. At the **Hillside Club** (2286 Cedar St., Berkeley) on Sunday, May 10, desserts and drinks sweeten Reichl's Mother's Day discussion of *Not Becoming My Mother and Other Things She Taught Me Along the Way*. 7 p.m., $45, $85 for couples (includes autographed copy of book). Reservations: BrownPaperTickets.com — *Anneli Rufus*

MOVIES

THE BOXER AND THE SPY

Tyson has too much emotion. *The Limits of Control* too little.

By Kelly Vance

Tyson is a seemingly contrite, surprisingly introspective creep with a hard-won sense of irony, but still a creep.

Even a person who knows nothing about the sport of boxing knows at least two things about Mike Tyson: 1) he bit someone's ear and 2) he was convicted of rape. With the documentary *Tyson*, filmmaker and Tyson confidant James Toback manages to establish that the former heavyweight boxing champion is also a reasonably articulate man, for all his advertised brutality, and that he's capable of reflecting on the morality of his life and career. Which means we're in for a spectacle — the conscientious confessions of an ear-biter and rapist.

Well, yes and no. Toback's 88-minute doc, featuring only Tyson's talking head (gleaned from a reported thirty hours of video) plus archival news footage and no narrator or commentary, functions better as a first-person excursion into the mentality of a particularly vicious prizefighter than as an anguished mea culpa.

Tyson is onscreen for virtually the entire running time, and he tells his story in more or less chronological order, starting with his tough childhood in Brownsville, Brooklyn, raising pigeons (a movie cliché, but evidently true) and scuffling in the dope trade. That life changed when he began juvenile boxing in the 1970s with his mentor, fight manager Cus D'Amato, who told him he could be the next champion of the world. D'Amato, who had also handled Floyd Patterson, "trained me to be totally ferocious in the ring and out," claims Tyson. Fighting at 217 to 219 lb. at his peak, Tyson was admittedly not a big heavyweight, but made up for his lack of size with speed, accuracy, and power. He prides himself on having practiced "the art of skulduggery" and outthinking his opponents.

In 1986, at just twenty years old, Tyson KO'd Trevor Berbick for the heavyweight title to become the youngest ever heavyweight champ. Thrilling bouts with Michael Spinks, Buster Douglas, and Evander Holyfield followed (Holyfield lost a piece of his ear in their notorious second matchup), but Tyson's troubles outside the ring overshadowed his ring accomplishments. Want to rile him up? Just say the name "Don King."

Because by age twenty Tyson had also married movie star Robin Givens, contracted gonorrhea, and become "intrigued by sex." By his own admission, sex and violence mingled in his mind as twin battlegrounds in which he must prevail or die. After his conviction for raping Miss Black Rhode Island, Tyson spent three and a half years in prison, where he became a Muslim and acquired tattoos of Mao Zedong and Che Guevara. He also, in his estimation, "became more humble and subservient." The forty-year-old we meet on camera lays on the self-pity — "Old too soon, smart too late" — and maintains he's tired of fighting: "I don't have this in my heart anymore."

Like Norman Mailer before him, writer-director Toback (*Fingers*, *The Pick-Up Artist*) seeks nobility of character in blood sport. Toback is looking in the wrong place. His subject is soiled. Tyson is a creep — a seemingly contrite, surprisingly introspective creep with a hard-won sense of irony, but still a creep. He's candid in his way about his brutal outlook on life, but candor alone can't redeem him. He "lost his composure" with the ear-biting thing, and saw the violent conquest of women as a continuation of his struggle to survive, he tells us. But there's no opposing point of view in the film.

Toback presumably wants us to see Tyson as a product of his times, but we can't really buy that because, after all, we have Muhammad Ali, who was everything Tyson was not. Mike Tyson, the anti-Ali, may indeed be a tragic figure worthy of Greek mythology (the way the film's publicity touts him), but if so he's more akin to one of those accursed grotesque mortals punished by the gods for daring to reach too high. *Tyson*, one of the most pathetic of documentaries, deserves to be his epitaph.

Tyson
Directed by James Toback. Featuring Mike Tyson. Opens Friday.

The Limits of Control
Written and directed by Jim Jarmusch. With Isaach De Bankolé, Tilda Swinton, John Hurt, Gael García Bernal, and Bill Murray. Opens Friday.

Here's how to make a Jim Jarmusch spy thriller: Have an actor (Isaach De Bankolé, of the striking African face) move mysteriously around various sites in Spain, dressed in impeccable European suits and saying almost nothing, seemingly waiting for some signal to spring into action. And that signal never comes. That, gentle reader, is the setup for Jim Jarmusch's *The Limits of Control*, the latest indication that Jarmusch, once (twenty years ago) the darling of the art house, has painted himself into a nasty, frustrating corner of his own devising.

Jarmusch's most successful entertainments — *Stranger than Paradise*, *Mystery Train*, *Dead Man*, *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*, *Broken Flowers* — have all been significantly underwritten, but the aptly titled *Limits* carries that concept to unbearable heights in the story of De Bankolé's nameless character, forever ordering a pair of espressos in separate cups and encountering a succession of similarly adrift actors as they float through Madrid, Almeria, and Sevilla, exchanging matchboxes. Each new matchbox contains a tiny note, written in code, which De Bankolé promptly eats after reading. He eats many of these, in many places, until he finally gets to a blank note. Aside from his final scene with Bill Murray inside a guarded complex in the countryside, the ritual with the notes is probably the high point in terms of narrative incident. Such are the lengths to which an apparent fascination with Michelangelo Antonioni can carry one.

But even Antonioni had motivations for his characters, however obscure. Here, our only clues about the Nameless One and his mission come from the vague, improvised-sounding repartee between him and the Woman in White (Tilda Swinton), the Mexican (Gael García Bernal), the Man with the Guitar (John Hurt), et al. The action is so shamelessly padded, so devoid of emotion, that we're relieved when our spy happens into a late-night tablao flamenco rehearsal and we're treated to some actual, spontaneous personality.

What could Jarmusch be thinking? Perhaps the bespectacled, nude woman who seems to follow the spy from place to place (Paz de la Huerta) holds the key — her derrière speaks volumes. Maybe the title is part of some interactive game Jarmusch is playing with his audience, as in: Try to control yourself while watching this movie. Well, we give up. *Limits* is nothing more than Jarmusch's worst film since *Night on Earth*. The spy does have nice clothes, though. ●

Feedback@EastBayExpress.com

MOVIES & THEATERS

To learn where a movie is playing, note the abbreviations at the end of each listing, then consult the theater guide at the bottom of this page. Capsule reviews are written by Andrew Gronvall (A.G.), Cole Haddon (C.H.), J.R. Jones (J.J.), and Kelly Vance (K.V.). For a schedule of repertory films, see One-Night Stands at the end of these listings. Please send info fourteen days before event date to editor@eastbayexpress.com

Showtimes Online
Movie showtimes and online ticket buying at EastBayExpress.com

OPENING

American Violet A simple, straightforward, true story of racial injustice in a small Texas town, circa 2000, [illegible] [illegible] — [illegible] taking on the county's biggest [illegible] (Michael O'Keefe), who can potentially ruin her life even further. No [illegible], no supernatural happenings, just a strong plot well told, [illegible] by producer Bill Haney, with fine supporting playing by Will Patton, [illegible]. (103 min.) (K.V.) [illegible], CAPH

Lemon Tree The striking Palestinian [illegible] Hiam Abbass (*The Visitor*) stars in [illegible] 2008 [illegible] [illegible] next door, just across the Green Line that separates the West Bank from [illegible], her orchards are declared a security threat, but she finds an ally (and unlikely suitor) in the media-savvy lawyer (Ali Suliman of *Paradise Now*) who [illegible] her protest to the Israeli Supreme Court. Director Eran Riklis [illegible] *The Syrian Bride* (2004), and this [illegible] [illegible]. The two Israelis who take her side are female, [illegible] underscores the film's message: a little less machismo might save a lot more than trees. In Hebrew and Arabic with subtitles. (106 min.) (A.G.) AL

[illegible] British filmmaker Paul Morrison [illegible] the Spanish Civil War [illegible] love story between poet Federico García Lorca (Javier Beltrán) and [illegible] Salvador Dalí (Robert Pattinson), while future surrealist film [illegible] Luis Buñuel (Matthew McNulty) looks on. [illegible] in the 1920s are made to look silly — Dalí in his [illegible], the boys dressing [illegible] at dinner, etc. It's a case of using conventional style to tell a story about unconventional [illegible], and screenwriter Philippa Goslett is the worst offender of them all. Everyone [illegible] makes little [illegible] (112 min.) (K.V.) [illegible], GA

The Merry Gentleman [illegible] Keaton [illegible] a [illegible] character [illegible] at Christmas — in this moody Chicago story [illegible] Keaton's directing debut. [illegible] a [illegible] woman (Kelly Macdonald) [illegible] husband (Bobby Cannavale). Screenwriter Ron Lazzeretti [illegible] characters, the two of them [illegible] Hurt [illegible]

Theater Guide
This guide explains the abbreviations at the end of each capsule. AL = Albany; ATF = Alameda Theatre & Cineplex; BB = Brenden Concord; BH = Blackhawk; BK = Brenden Pittsburg; BX = Bay Street; CA = California; CAPH = CineArts Pleasant Hill; [illegible] = Century Berkeley; [illegible] = Century Contra Costa Cinemas; CEPH = Century Pleasant Hill; [illegible] = Century Hilltop; [illegible] = Century Hayward; [illegible] = Cinedome Newark; [illegible] = Crow Canyon; CSC = Chabot Space and Science; CUC = Century Union City; CWC = Century Walnut Creek; [illegible] = Deer Valley; [illegible] = Grand Lake; [illegible] = Jack London; LP = La Peña; [illegible] = Oaks; [illegible] = Orinda; PM = Piedmont; [illegible] = Regal Antioch; RCE = Regal Cinemas Emeryville; [illegible] = Regal Hacienda; [illegible] = Shattuck; UAB = UA Berkeley; UAEB = UA Emery Bay; V = Vine; WWS = West Wind Solano

MILK

Macdonald's [illegible] office pull and Tom [illegible] (as a lonely, self-destructive [illegible] detective). In the end the movie recycles too much, adding [illegible] here to the old metaphysical assassin story that's been circulating since *Le Samouraï* (90 min.) [illegible]

State Bay An [illegible] *Fanon* ("Scrubs") [illegible] ("The [illegible]"), and Mike Epps (*Next Night*, *Soul Men*) and in [illegible] action-comedy buddy pic about two [illegible] criminals who are mistakenly [illegible] a package of [illegible]. (90 min.) [illegible]

Star Trek J.J. Abrams remakes the brand in *Star Trek* and in the process [illegible] franchise [illegible] thought was dead. This was accomplished by jumping [illegible] Captain Jean-Luc Picard's *The Next Generation* to the first adventures [illegible] T. Kirk, Spock, and Dr. McCoy [illegible] the Enterprise [illegible] even the original television series. [illegible] in a nifty time-traveling Spock (Leonard Nimoy) from the [illegible] of the [illegible] future. Abrams managed to [illegible] in and [illegible] of surprise to the proceedings. Recasting is adventurous (especially Zachary Quinto and Karl Urban as Spock and McCoy), and the [illegible] will [illegible] want to up and join [illegible] (126 min.) [illegible]

Tulpan We never get a [illegible] in the face of the title [illegible] but for sheer [illegible] ethnography director Sergey Dvortsevoy's [illegible] [illegible] of life is hard to beat. On the [illegible] Steppe, a [illegible] Asa [illegible] to marry the daughter of the family in the next yurt over, but there are complications [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] of "Sheep of [illegible]." [illegible] in [illegible] Dvortsevoy wrote the screenplay with Gennady Ostrovsky. Starring [illegible] Kuchinchirekov as Asa (100 min.) [illegible]

Tyson Director [illegible] Toback [illegible] Mike Tyson during the [illegible] of the former *The Pick-Up Artist*, and the result is an intriguing but necessarily one-sided documentary monologue that answers many, but not all, questions [illegible] Tyson's [illegible] as a [illegible] heavyweight champion in the '80s and '90s. Tyson [illegible] and attempts to [illegible] how and why his [illegible] career [illegible] the [illegible] Recollections are [illegible] by news footage, including [illegible] of his rape [illegible] and Tyson's [illegible] of Evander Holyfield in the ring in 1997 (90 min.) [illegible]

ONGOING

17 Again [illegible] youth-market Zachary makes [illegible] use of the story of a 37-year-old [illegible] named Mike (Matthew Perry) who [illegible] up [illegible] his seventeen-year-old body (played by [illegible] Zac Efron), and [illegible] back to high [illegible] 2009 as "Mark." Efron's [illegible] [illegible] by the [illegible] [illegible] Mark/Mike [illegible] off the sexual advances of his own daughter [illegible] and [illegible] from the [illegible] his "wife" (Leslie Mann), directed in typical TV [illegible] style by [illegible] Burr Steers from a screenplay by [illegible]. With [illegible] Lennon [illegible] furiously as the [illegible] [illegible] (95 min.) [illegible]

8 X 10 dreamer [illegible] (Dustin Chang [illegible]) and the power to see the past in full light. With the help of an [illegible] photograph, he [illegible] to unravel the mystery of his father's death. In Hindi with English subtitles. [illegible]

Aa Dekhen Zara [illegible] photographer Ray [illegible] when he inherits his grandfather's camera. In Hindi with English subtitles. [illegible]

Adventureland [illegible] nostalgia [illegible] that actually looks like a movie shot in the '80s. James, a college grad with no particular prospects (Jesse Eisenberg), takes a summer job at the [illegible] amusement park in his hometown of Pittsburgh [illegible] to remedy his virginity. The plan works. The pic's main [illegible] are [illegible] characters: the [illegible] (Matt Bush), the [illegible] (Martin Starr), a [illegible] (Margarita Levieva), and James' [illegible] (Kristen Stewart from *Twilight*). [illegible] *American Graffiti* [illegible] [illegible] (107 min.) [illegible]

Anvil! The Story of Anvil This ingratiating documentary proves that most, if not all, the [illegible] *Spinal Tap* [illegible] in real life, as we [illegible] the thirty-year-plus careers of [illegible] Steve "Lips" Kudlow and drummer Robb Reiner, [illegible] of the [illegible] metal band Anvil. After [illegible] [illegible] in the '80s, Lips and [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] European tours, [illegible] managers, and the ignominy of minimum-wage day jobs [illegible] but they [illegible] of humor, and they never give up. [illegible] Gervasi must be their biggest fan. They'll probably grow on you as well (80 min.) [illegible]

Battle for Terra The gorgeous, [illegible] inhabitants of the [illegible] [illegible] their [illegible] home from [illegible] intellectuals from Earth in this [illegible] entertaining adventure [illegible] about it is the production design by [illegible] Aristomenis Tsirbas, a visual effects artist who's been working his way up the CGI ladder (*A Wrinkle in Time*, *Titanic*).

Nicole Beharie in *American Violet*

Otherwise, it's "[illegible] girl [illegible] boy [illegible]" [illegible] and the [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible], Luke [illegible], [illegible] Perlman, [illegible] Perry, and [illegible] (85 min.) [illegible]

Billu Barber This remake of 2007 Malayalam film *Katha Parayumbol* [illegible] the story of small-town family man Billu and his childhood friend Sahir Khan, a famous actor [illegible]. In Hindi with English subtitles. NR

Dinosaur Babies [illegible] Morgan Freeman explains the [illegible] [illegible] in 3D [illegible] IMAX documentary. CSC

Crank: High Voltage This sequel to 2006's [illegible] again stars [illegible] as Chev Chelios; this time around he [illegible] the Chinese [illegible] his nearly indestructible heart and [illegible] it with a battery-powered version that requires regular jolts of electricity. (96 min.) [illegible]

Delhi 6 Bollywood drama, music, and romance from director Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra (*Rang De Basanti*). Starring Abhishek Bachchan, Sonam Kapoor. In Hindi with English subtitles. NR

Dinosaurs Alive! From the Triassic to the Cretaceous, dinosaurs are uncovered by paleontologists and [illegible]. CSC

Earth This [illegible] from Disney's new nature [illegible] is an encyclopedic [illegible] and spectacular footage shot by more than two [illegible] cinematographers. The three [illegible] — polar bears, [illegible] elephants, and a humpback whale [illegible] over the [illegible] of a year. According to [illegible] [illegible] the footage comes from the 2006 BBC miniseries *Planet Earth*, and the polar bear [illegible] in National Geographic's [illegible] documentary *Arctic Tale* (2007). [illegible] directors Alastair Fothergill and Mark Linfield [illegible] with [illegible] as the TV show [illegible] to craft a [illegible] [illegible] (the same [illegible]), [illegible] an eye for the [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] making the [illegible] James Earl Jones narrates, [illegible] (90 min.) [illegible]

Enlighten Up! Over the course of a worldwide romp, filmmaker Kate Churchill attempts to prove to skeptic Nick Rosen that yoga can transform anyone. (82 min.) [illegible]

Fast and Furious This [illegible] [illegible] to 2001's *The Fast and the Furious* reunites [illegible] (Vin Diesel) and undercover-cop-turned-FBI-agent Brian O'Conner (Paul Walker) in a joint effort to stop a [illegible] smuggler that [illegible] Letty (Michelle Rodriguez). [illegible] Jordana Brewster [illegible] (107 min.) [illegible]

Fighting Four [illegible] director [illegible] this [illegible] exploitation flick, which [illegible] by [illegible] Authentic [illegible] and [illegible] attention to detail help evoke [illegible] New York [illegible] in all [illegible] reality, but the [illegible] about a [illegible] underground fighter (Channing Tatum) [illegible] [illegible] Director [illegible] the [illegible] screenplay quick, and the

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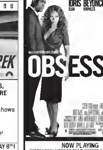

NOW PLAYING

CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS FOR THEATERS AND SHOWTIMES

Zachary Quinto in *Star Trek*

Howard and runs the Hannah are minor and it's activity applied – presumably on that ... with a between-eight-ish between (Zulay Henao) ... Terrence Howard struggles to add substance to an underwritten role as Tatum's manager. Dito Montiel (*A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints*) (105 min.) (A.G.) [illegible]

Forces of Nature Learn about the causes of earthquakes, volcanoes, tornadoes, and ... and be awed by their effects on mere humans in National Geographic's latest IMAX-ready offering. CSC

The Garden The deeper we go into the dispute over the plot of land in South Central Los Angeles, the more tangled the story – but that's the way it is in documentaryville. An organized group of mostly Mexican American urban farmers have been growing fruit and vegetables on the green city space as the first opens in 2006, and filmmaker Scott Hamilton Kennedy follows the ensuing politicos (including LA mayor Villaraigosa), ... and ... community ... as the land-use matter escalates. Further proof, if any is needed, that private property is the sacrosanct cornerstone of American life, for better or worse. Written and directed by Kennedy. (80 min.) (K.V.) BCC

Ghosts of Girlfriends Past "When did casual sex become a crime?" asks Matthew McConaughey in this lively romantic comedy. A photographer infamous for his womanizing, he gets an unexpected answer to his questions when the ghost of a playboy uncle (Michael Douglas) ... on the eve of a family wedding and ... to mend his callous ways. Writers Jon Lucas and Scott Moore steal from the best, gleefully robbing from *A Christmas Carol* to fashion a screenplay with heart and sharp one-liners. Jennifer Garner is sweet and smart as McConaughey's ... friend and former lover. Lacey Chabert looks ... as the woman marrying McConaughey's brother, and Robert Forster and Anne Archer are good as her parents. Mark Waters (*The Spiderwick Chronicles*, *Mean Girls*) directed. (115 min.) (A.G.) [illegible]

Goodbye Solo This quiet, mostly African "border crossing" drama details the relationship between a ... bitter old Southerner named William (played by former Elvis Presley pal Red West) and Solo, the West African immigrant cab driver (newcomer Souleymane Sy Savane) who ... in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Instead of a 21st-century *Driving Miss Daisy*, ... Ramin Bahrani, who wrote the screenplay with Bahareh Azimi, ... the film's ... and ... automatically ... Acting kudos to young Diana Franco Galindo as Solo's stepdaughter, Alex. (91 min.) (K.V.) S

Hannah Montana: The Movie At the urging of her parent (Billy Ray Cyrus as Robby Ray Stewart), Miley Stewart (Miley Cyrus, of course) takes a break from her life as pop singer Hannah ... to return to her hometown of Crowley Corners, Tennessee, and discover what matters most in life. (102 min.) [illegible]

The Haunting in Connecticut A by-the-numbers haunted house story that will only keep your interest because ... [illegible]

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Roger Ebert, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

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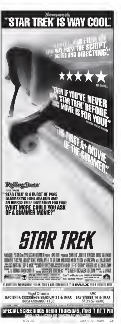

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the gifts as a medium by his d-bag daddy. The rest of the movie is about a family who moves and [illegible] house, a [illegible] to the [illegible] where the son is being housed. Predictable [illegible]-familiar "scares" [illegible] are slowly [illegible] with little and [illegible] work, and a [illegible] the and hospital and because that's not real-estate or anything. The [illegible] plays admirably to make up for the rest of the movie, but ... well, doesn't. [illegible]

The Human Body Ever wonder how your body does what it does ... without your having to tell it to? Find out in this fascinating trip through (you guessed it) the human body. Watch a [illegible] journey down our cells dancing to music, and a 250-mph [illegible] (Directed) CSC

I Love You, Man A comedic celebration of male friendships and all its complexities, I Love You, Man [illegible] a world often ignored by cinema. Paul Rudd plays a [illegible] LA real-estate agent [illegible] out he being a "girlfriend guy" [illegible] he gets engaged and realizes he doesn't have any genuine male friends to stand on his side of the altar, he sets out trying to [illegible]. His search [illegible] played by Jason Segel. Their [illegible] begins to [illegible] and [illegible] threatens [illegible] relationship. [illegible] Judd Apatow [illegible] with a [illegible] joke, but the laughs [illegible] never stop. [illegible]

Is Anybody There? [illegible] Michael Caine and [illegible] young challenger Bill Milner (Son of Rambow) go toe-to-toe in a battle [illegible] [illegible] at the North of England. Caine [illegible] Directed [illegible] by John Crowley, who's done [illegible] — The Boy A. Costarring Anne-Marie Duff and [illegible] as Mum and Dad (95 min.) [illegible]

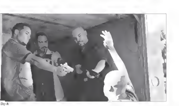
Knowing Nicolas Cage gives an [illegible] performance in the apocalyptic [illegible]. He plays a [illegible] whose [illegible] young son [illegible] a cryptic page of [illegible] that were [illegible] fifty years earlier in a grade school time capsule. As it turns out, the digits [illegible] dates and other details of major disasters that [illegible] after the capsule was buried, and they don't look well for the near future. [illegible] of mayhem and destruction are [illegible] by [illegible] special effects [illegible] and [illegible], but there's a long wait for them [illegible]. The dialogue is [illegible], composer [illegible] from Bernard Herrmann, and [illegible] Cage's ally Alex Proyas (The Crow, Dark City) Directed (121 min.) [illegible]

The Living Sea You've seen Finding Nemo now see the real thing; it's a trip to the bottom of the waves. [illegible] by Meryl Streep, with [illegible] by Sting. CSC

Monsters Vs. Aliens When a bride-to-be gets hit by an [illegible] meteorite she quickly grows to gargantuan proportions. That gets her whisked away to a [illegible] prison where monsters like Dr. Cockroach, the Missing Link [illegible] and [illegible] are housed [illegible] the 50 Foot [illegible] the Fly, the Creature from the [illegible] Lagoon, the Blob, and, well, some sort of Godzilla/Mothra hybrid. Their job, if they [illegible] to accept it (and they do), is to [illegible] an alien [illegible] and [illegible] paying homage to [illegible]. The [illegible] is a fun enough ride thanks [illegible] to the cast's voice work, including Reese Witherspoon, Hugh Laurie and Seth Rogen. The [illegible] movie's embrace-your-inner freak message [illegible] (94 min.) [illegible]

Mysteries of Egypt National Geographic and a team of [illegible] reveal the [illegible] legends, history — and most importantly, mysteries [illegible] of [illegible] Egyptian civilization. CSC

Obsessed This [illegible] entry in the psycho-[illegible] [illegible] Idris Elba (The Wire) [illegible] whose failure to set boundaries with a psychotic [illegible] (Ali Larter) threatens his career and "perfect" marriage to Beyoncé Knowles. While [illegible] and Larter have a [illegible] he and Knowles [illegible]



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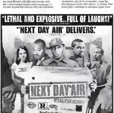

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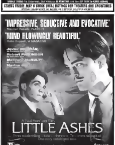

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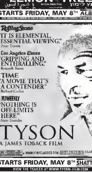

Rolling Stone
"IT IS ELEMENTAL, ESSENTIAL VIEWING."
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Javier Beltrán and Robert Pattinson in *Little Ashes*

chemistry of [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] laughs while [illegible] the [illegible] angle, and the [illegible] characters [illegible] Cowboy ([illegible] O'Connell) and [illegible] gay secretary (Matthew Humphreys) do more to [illegible] than the [illegible]. [illegible] is a TV journalist [illegible] ([illegible] min.). [illegible]

Sin Nombre The gang-bangers and desperate migrants in Cary Fukunaga's dirty, [illegible] thriller [illegible] have one thing in common: they're drawn [illegible] to the US [illegible] the [illegible] of a young [illegible] named Casper (Edgar Flores) and a young woman named Sayra (Paulina Gaitan) [illegible] picture of [illegible] in Mexico and [illegible]. Writer-director Fukunaga [illegible] gets [illegible] performances from his cast of non-actors; cinematographer Adriano Goldman also shines. [illegible] the [illegible] of refugees, etc. So what if Casper and Sayra's love story [illegible] on the run? It has the [illegible] of truth. The US-Mexican [illegible] also stars Kristian Ferrer and Tenoch Huerta Mejía ([illegible] min.). [illegible]

The Soloist Worthwhile [illegible] drama [illegible] a full [illegible] with the [illegible] performance of Jamie Foxx, as a homeless, mentally ill musical [illegible], and Robert Downey Jr. as the newspaper columnist who first profiles him, then befriends him and offers help. [illegible] director Joe Wright (*Atonement*, *Pride & Prejudice*) [illegible] the pathos to a [illegible] Los Angeles [illegible]. Nathaniel Anthony Ayers [illegible]. The screenplay, from LA Times reporter Steve Lopez' book, [illegible] by Susannah Grant (*Erin Brockovich*), [illegible] newspaper [illegible] heart [illegible] followed by a punch at the [illegible]. With Catherine Keener and Tom Hollander ([illegible] min.). [illegible]

State of Play Russell Crowe and Rachel McAdams are reporters for the Washington [illegible] ([illegible]) trying to [illegible] mysterious death of a congressman's aide, [illegible] (Ben Affleck), and investigating the [illegible]. This [illegible] thriller was [illegible] from a 2003 BBC miniseries, with [illegible]

[illegible] to make [illegible] is a [illegible] old-school investigator [illegible]. But the [illegible] recent [illegible] but the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible]. [illegible] ([illegible] min.). [illegible]

Sugar [illegible] story of [illegible] major [illegible] of a young Dominican Republic [illegible] named Sugar [illegible] for the [illegible]. [illegible] ([illegible]). [illegible]

Sunshine Cleaning [illegible] Amy Adams and Emily Blunt [illegible] from Albuquerque [illegible] springboard to [illegible] Sunshine [illegible]. [illegible] Alan Arkin [illegible] Steve Zahn [illegible] Jason Spevack [illegible] and Clifton Collins Jr. [illegible] ([illegible] min.). [illegible]

Watchmen That's Jackie Earle Haley underneath the [illegible] as Rorschach [illegible] 1985 [illegible] Nixon [illegible] from the graphic novel by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons [illegible] more than 2 1/2 hours [illegible]. Containing Billy Crudup as the [illegible] blue guy [illegible] the latex bodysuit, Carla Gugino as the [illegible], and Jeffrey Dean Morgan [illegible]. [illegible] Zack Snyder [illegible] *300*. In *Watchmen* it's 20th-century [illegible] ([illegible] 162 min.). [illegible]

X-Men Origins: Wolverine Fans of *X-Men* [illegible] and [illegible] *The Last Stand*, which is a mixed compliment. Then again, there are parts that are [illegible]. [illegible] Hugh Jackman [illegible] Weapon X program [illegible] Sabretooth (Liev Schreiber) [illegible] ([illegible] 107 min.). [illegible]

ONE NIGHT STANDS

THURSDAY, MAY 7

Midaugust Eve ([illegible] min., 2008). San Francisco International Film Festival ([illegible])

For the Love of History: The Story of [illegible] Film ([illegible] min., 2008). San Francisco International Film Festival ([illegible])

Goldfinger ([illegible] min., 1964). [illegible] ([illegible])

FRIDAY, MAY 8

[illegible] ([illegible] min., 2008-2009). [illegible] ([illegible])

The Big Lebowski (117 min., 1998). Cult Classics [illegible] (PM, midnight)

SAT., MAY 9

The Big Lebowski (117 min., 1998). Cult Classics [illegible] (PM, midnight)

The Godfather (175 min., 1972). ([illegible])

SUN., MAY 10

The Godfather (175 min., 1972). ([illegible])

WED., MAY 13

The Century of Self Episode Two: The Engineering of Consent ([illegible] min., 2002). [illegible] ([illegible])

★★★★

Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times

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J. Hoberman, THE VILLAGE VOICE
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THE GARDEN

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Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Garner

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SIN NOMBRE (R)
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STILL SMILIN'

The upbeat indie-pop of San Francisco collective Still Flyn is a dedicated "no-harsh zone."

By Nate Seltenrich

Still Flyn

[illegible]

There's a perfectly good reason I'm scarfing burritos in the Mission with approximately half of San Francisco reggae/pop collective Still Flyn on April 20, and it has nothing to do with the munchies. Admittedly, the band is less than cavalier about its fondness for the dank heavenly herb — just listen to "Couple Smokes," off its debut EP *Time Wrinkle* (or EJ, as the band calls it, for Extended Jam), released in 2006 on Oakland label Antenna Farm. *"Smoke said to me 'Hey man you don't look dry/Just take a look at the bottom of my feet as I levitate into the sky,'"* sings frontman songwriter and mastermind Sean Rawls in a fine mock-reggae voice. The track, which features the horn riff from Outkast's 1998 song "SpottieOttieDopaliscious," slowed down like molasses, reprises as the dub version "Couple More Smokes" later on in *Time Wrinkle*, as if to prove it was no accident.

The veiled references, or just as often not-so-veiled, don't end there. Still Flyn's second EJ, 2007's *Za Cloud*, features up-tempo manifesto "The Art of Jamming" and rocksteady saga "The Bird Is Aware," a song both campy (it borrows the papa-oom mow-mow line made famous by the Trashmen's "Surfin' Bird") and Dadaist (it centers on a giant talking bird). In case that's too subtle, the back cover art includes a white "Jambulance" with a burning joint painted on the side. Still Flyn has even been known to partake onstage. "We talked in the beginning about bringing a couch onstage and having people that were in the band just sit on the couch and smoke weed or something," drummer/vocalist Bren Mead explained. "We never really got around to that."

"Actually we have — just without the couch," interjected guitarist Zach Moran, whose point was met with a round of laughter. And, finally, I'm told one band member happens to be absent from the interview due to his participation in the festivities of the day — the very member, in fact, who suggested we meet today.

But this is not a story about marijuana. It is a story about music: some of the most upbeat, life-affirming, whimsical, and downright fun music incubating in the [illegible] Bay Area music scene right now. It's the sort of music you can't get out of your body, because the lyrics are completely original and charming, and because the music is so uplifting you don't want it to leave. Fellow indie pop collectives Broken Social Scene and the Polyphonic Spree seem staid by comparison.

That being the case, there are more important reasons for us to be gathering: namely the band's debut full-length album, a fancy free dance party known as *Never Gonna Touch the Ground*, due out the next day in the USA and on the 20th itself in some European countries. This is cause for celebration, and burritos.

"The band is this really positive experience," explains Rawls in a tranquil, nearly monotone voice that's considerably less expressive than his Still Flyn persona. "It's not like we're the happiest people that have ever existed. We're normal people, but the band is a very positive thing. The music brings it out." Indeed, the sixteen core members and thirty-plus spiritual members of the international collective embrace mottoes like "fuck the stress" and "take your shoes off, you don't need them in the sky," declare the band a "no-harsh zone," especially during performances, and exclaim *We're slamming high fives cause we're livin' the life* in "No Go-Kart Ideas," a song on the new CD. These things are said in earnest, without irony. It's entirely believable and thus attractive.

But there's a flip side, if you can call it that, which is for the listener to suspect that perhaps, just maybe, the members of Still Flyn are the happiest people that ever existed — that hanging out with them would be the most fun one could possibly have. Rawls says he and the band often receive enthusiastic invitations to after-parties based solely upon this assumption. "They probably have weird ideas about me, like I'm this weird superhappy dude all the time," he said. "People think we're gonna be the wildest people ever."

Make no mistake: They do party. But they also have day jobs, spouses, and tour schedules. And they're not exactly kids anymore. Percussionist Phil Horan recalls being told by a group of somewhat dismayed teens in Melbourne, Australia that the band looked more preppy and "school teacherish" than they'd expected. This was an apt observation: Vocalist Jaime Knight teaches art at Berkeley High.

Show Details

Still Flyn's CD Release Party takes place Saturday, May 9 at Cafe du Nord (2170 Market St., San Francisco). $10. 9:30 p.m. CafeduNord.com

Nevertheless, if only for escapism, it's still enticing to imagine them as consummate partiers and dispensers of good vibes. That is, after all, the genius of Still Flyn's music. And it's no accident. "I remember Sean telling me at the very beginning that his vision for the band was to have a party onstage where at any one time there are more people partying than there are playing," said Knight. That may not quite be the case, but the spirit remains, and Rawls' bandmates say he works hard at promoting it. It's quite possible to get utterly hassled out in the process of cultivating a no-harsh zone, especially when it comes to coordinating the logistics of hitting the road with fifteen bandmates.

Touring wasn't initially part of their plan. "We had never even considered going on tour," said Rawls. "It didn't even seem like an option." But that was before Australian indie pop group Architecture in Helsinki, buddies of the band who eventually ceded a couple of members to Still Flyn's ranks, convinced them to join a brief West Coast tour in 2005. At the time, Architecture in Helsinki was enjoying a small-scale explosion, while the five-month-old Still Flyn was still an unknown, even to itself, and for reasons more philosophical than practical had amassed an unwieldy number of members.

But Architecture in Helsinki insisted. It took two vans to get Still Flyn down the coast, and together with Architecture's expanded lineup, the two bands accounted for 24 people. Their five-day jaunt, highlighted by a successful gig at Los Angeles' Troubadour, opened Still Flyn's eyes to its potential, particularly for a group originally conceived as a "joke reggae band."

More importantly, it helped cement Still Flyn's distinct sound and outlook, generally referred to by a word of their own invention, hammjammin, as in *We're gonna start a hammjammin band* or *Total hammjammin!* No small credit for this must go to the band's so-called Guru — the DJ Hammond, an old friend and bandmate of Rawls who also does their album art — who initiated for that inaugural trip a practice he's maintained to this day. Before every tour, he prepares a high-spirited list of tips and activities for each day the band is on the road, to be read on a daily basis and followed as closely as possible. These itineraries have helped Still Flyn navigate subsequent tours of Sweden and Australia with style and utmost merriment.

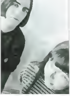
"Let's get it, guys," the very first itinerary begins. "5:30 — meet up in the parking lot of the practice space. ... Once everyone is there sit down in a circle — and talk about things. Nothing lame in the chats, just awesome things. Talk about the expectations for tonight's show. Crack a few. Always remember to laugh." Four years later, they still haven't forgotten the Guru's advice, and it looks to be something Rawls will take to his grave. The final song on the new album finds him singing cheerfully: *I really want to see the look on my face/Yeah, when I die* ●

Nate.Seltenrich@EastBayExpress.com

NEUTERING ROCK 'N' ROLL

The Dutchess and the Duke and the Vaselines work a similar landscape

By Dave Cantor



The Vaselines.

Just over a year ago, an 1860 recording of the Debussy composition "Clair de Lune" was unearthed in France. The brief ten-second section sung by an unknown woman, which predates the earliest of Edison's recordings by almost twenty years, reminds us of the decidedly pleasurable sound of a woman's voice being set down to tape for an audience to later consume — or, in this case, discover.

In the post-everything world, it would be foolish to comment upon the merits of one sex's vocal ability over the other. (To hear Gram Parsons's reprisal of "Do Right Woman," replete with identical lyrics to that of the Aretha Franklin version, does, however, call into question some gender issues.) But groups imbued with the most confidence and arguably the most talent can move beyond this morass of pronouns and simply come up with a few memorable verses. That, though, isn't the only connection between Scotland's the Vaselines and Seattle's the Dutchess and the Duke, who play together at Bimbo's 365 Club in San Francisco this week.

In addition to mining gendered dichotomies, each group seeks to incorporate a modicum of similar influences. Even as so much of music's lyrical content is consumed by ruminations on love and loss, between these two particular bands the topic gets a slight reworking. That said, neither duo drastically redefines the way in which songs are structured, but tries to lend a new perspective or hook to the proceedings. Sonically, the bands don't share too many similarities, but the burst of some mythologized folk music serves as the underpinnings of both bands.

At times, the Vaselines become a bit too irreverent even for the most ardent fan to look past — *Rory! Ride me slowly/ Ride me raw, raw, raw* being an example of a ridiculous yet effective lyric amidst a jangly pop offering. But a few occasions find the genuine emotional content able to bolster the simple muse and words loosened from each track. "Slushy," on which both Frances McKee and Eugene Kelly sing, puts forth a simple sketch of two women who presumably the songwriter didn't have the gall to approach. Again, content-wise it's not all that dramatic. But hearing McKee sing a few passionate couplets about the subject of Kelly's gaze not only significantly broadens the track's appeal musically but connects the two singers in some genderless, albeit lovelorn state.

Much the same can be said for the Seattleites' "I Am Just a Ghost" from its 2008 disc *She's the Dutchess, He's the Duke*. The song, which could be construed as more artfully crafted than anything from the Vaselines' catalog, tells a nondescript lover *I ain't got no heart to love/I ain't got no hand to hold/ And it's enough to drive you crazy*. The gender-neutral subject of the song allows both Jesse Lortz and Kimberly Morrison to vocalize how this unrequited emotional situation is actually going to be played out. It doesn't look too good. Working in a more folksy tradition, the Dutchess and the Duke examine as much interpersonal lore as any other group. But while the Vaselines run traditional song craft through a screen of serpentine feedback, the Seattleites prefer a more toned-down, contemplative approach.

"I was listening to a lot of Stones when I wrote that album," Lortz admits after being asked why so many critics attempted to connect the music of the Dutchess and the Duke with that of the Brits' catalog, "so it makes sense." Referring to the Stones' sound during the period of 1967 to 1968, he added, "That was their experimental period, where their songs were a little more introspective and human."

The comparisons, spurious or not, can't manage to simplify the work that Lortz and Morrison have created thus far. Lortz explains, however, that the band's forthcoming disc, which was recorded in Oakland with the Gris Gris' Greg Ashley, is "a very different record than the first." With this album due out in the fall, it'll be a chance for the Northwest duo to extricate themselves from the pervasive ties to rock 'n' roll's past.

The 150-year history of recording won't be recast when the Dutchess and the Duke open for the Vaselines at Bimbo's. But the two uniquely matched groups will have the chance to not only remind audiences of past triumphs, but the way in which a band can unknowingly affect the individual — or even the greater culture. ●

Feedback@EastBayExpress.com

Show Details

The Vaselines and the Dutchess and the Duke play Bimbo's 365 Club (1025 Columbus Ave., San Francisco) on Monday, May 11, 8 p.m. $25. Bimbos365Club.com

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CD REVIEWS

A SPICY SONIC STEW

Europe's next-generation hip-hop producers, hard-driving Polish folk, and another foray into bluegrass pop

Shuko & DJ Dutchmaster

The Foundation

It was inevitable that some of hip-hop's next great producers would come from Europe. Even as American rap fans have the audacity to question whether artists should still be judged by skills (as opposed to hype and swagger), kids from Spain to Germany are internalizing English battle rhymes and preferring scratched hooks to Auto-Tuned choruses. Enter Shuko, a traditional German beat genius who slid into the North American underground, lighting the fire under Bekay, Donjah Raze and Sonlstice — all of whom feature on *The Foundation*, along with some thirty other MCs (Boston giants XL and Dre Robinson among them). On the downside, some of these cuts — like Hell Razah's "Thankful" and "Su pah" from R.A. the Rugged Man — have already been around the block, and some of houseboy's samples are chronically overused. In particular, the chipmunk soul loop on Donnah's "Give It Up," which I've heard at least four times over the past three years. Still, Shuko is a gifted young artist with a serious career to grow into. And, more important, he already has a cast of subterranean all-stars who are eager to devour everything he cooks up. (Coalmine)

— Chris Faraone

Warsaw Village Band

Infinity

You might assume by its name that the Warsaw Village Band is seriously devoted to maintaining Poland's folk traditions. Well, yes and no.

The Villagers know the music of their homeland, but it's only one ingredient in their spicy sonic stew. Warsaw Village Band explores and maximizes common ground shared by folk sounds of Poland, Scandinavia, Central and Southeastern Europe and the Hebrew peoples of Eastern Europe with dollops of rock, hip-hop, and a bit of dub. There's plenty of swirling, slightly scratchy fiddle, throbbing and ebullient rhythms, and tart, slightly strident female vocals evoking Lisa Gerrard (ex-Dead Can Dance) and the Bulgarian Women's Choir (also locals Charming Hostess). "Skip Funk" shows that the rhythms of DJ turntable funk and Northern Europe can dovetail beautifully. "Lazy John Dance" has a sinuous fiddle solo that seems vaguely Celtic, followed by another recalling John Cale's manic viola in the Velvet Underground. (I could swear I heard a few bars of "Heroin" in there.)

Though there's no electric guitar to be heard, *Infinity* is just as driven and pounding as the Modern Lovers, VU, or the Clash. (Barbes)

— Mark Keresman

Sara Watkins

Sara Watkins

Along with Alison Krauss and the odd success of the mountain music-saturated soundtrack *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, Nickel Creek helped bluegrass cross over to the pop side without watering down the spirit of the genre. That's not to say the Creek didn't have its slightly subversive side, whether it was tossing off the odd Pavement or Britney Spears cover or playing Lollapalooza. Although the trio decided to go on an indefinite hiatus, which it announced on its 2007 Farewell (For Now) Tour, two years later fiddling vocalist Sara Watkins has tapped erstwhile Mutual Admiration Society bandmate (and, oh yeah, Led Zeppelin bassist) John Paul Jones to produce and play on her self-titled debut.

While it's tempting to compare Jones' foray into bluegrass to that of ex-Zep mate Robert Plant's collaboration with Krauss, the latter's project was an all-covers affair, whereas Watkins had a hand in writing more than half these songs. There's plenty for old-timey music fans to sink their teeth into, from instrumentals like the mellifluous "Freiderick," with its crisp interplay between Watkins' playing and Ronnie McCoury's mandolin, and chugging hoedown "Jefferson," to self-penned cuts like the Celtic sturm-und-drang of "Bygones" and gorgeous opener "All This Time." Much of the album is on the slow and deliberate side, which gives Watkins the opportunity to pour her pliable croon into everything from a forlorn reading of Tom Waits' "Pony" to a sturdy interpretation of the gospel standard "Give Me Jesus."

Quite the inspired debut, the album also gives solace to Nickel Creek fans via appearances by Watkins' bandmates Sean Watkins and Chris Thile, although never on the same track. (Nonesuch)

— Dave Gil de Rubio

Sara Watkins plays the Swedish American Hall (2174 Market St., San Francisco) on Tuesday, May 12, 8 p.m. $20. CafeduNord.com

LOCAL LICKS

BY N A [illegible]

Damn Handsome and the Birthday Suits

Decapitate the People for the Government

Despite the awkward name, puzzling album title, and amateur artwork, Damn Handsome's music is absolutely worthwhile. The San Francisco trio's four tunes draw deftly from pop-punk and glam rock, like Green Day circa 1995 crossed with Green Day circa 2005. (self-released)

At the Rockit Room (406 Clement St., San Francisco) on May 11, 8 p.m., free.

Gemini Soul

Dark Skin Babies: The Movement

It's the band's boldest artistic statement yet, but Gemini Soul may have gone a bit overboard in crafting *Dark Skin Babies: The Movement*. Two discs of what the band deems "jazz for a new generation" — a smooth, funky hybrid highlighted by Ajamu Akinyele's poppin' bass and rendered with a futuristic electronic feel — gives listeners too few new ideas in too much space. (Pearl Jam Recording)

At EON Coffee (24970 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward) on May 10, 1 p.m., free.

Various Artists

Still Here and Gone: Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowouts

If you love harmonica and you love the blues, this is your album. Two discs and two solid hours of various styles and artist personalities should provide more than enough fodder for the blues harmonica fetishist. Culled from fifteen years of Oakland resident Hummel's *Blowout* concert series, the collection provides a comprehensive overview of this small slice of the musical world. (Electro-Fi Records)

At Yoshi's Oakland (510 Embarcadero West, Oakland) May 8 through May 10. Times and ticket prices vary.

Victor Little

Inner Portrait

Perhaps the last place you'd expect to find the Mars Volta's furiously fast and technical new drummer is on a jazz-funk fusion album, but that's just where El Cerrito prodigy Thomas Pridgen has landed. He's in good company with veteran Bay Area session bassist Victor Little, who more than deserves to be out front with this excellent solo debut. (self-released)

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CONCERTS & CLUBS

THURSDAY 7

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Rountup Saloon, 9 pm, free

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Pete [illegible], Stacy Plough, 8 pm, $10

[illegible] Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $20.50-$21.50

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Cafe Van Kleef, 8 pm, $5

[illegible] 9:30 pm, free

[illegible] Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $18

Holly Park The Annex, Jazz Island, 8 pm, $10

[illegible] The Alley, 9 pm, free

Funk & Pop

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Chubby Chubbies, BluesClub, 8 pm, $8

The [illegible] [illegible] Sports Bar, 10 pm, free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Community Booth w/ [illegible], Red Potaroo, Lucky Dub, Sasha Rose, & [illegible], plus panel Thompson at 7:30 p.m., Ashkenaz, 8:30 pm, $8-$15

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

Shirley Kaneyo Muramoto [illegible] Japanese koto music, Berkeley Public Library, Central Branch, 12-1:30 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Mar 23, 8 pm, free

[illegible] Swedish American Hall, 7:30 pm, $25

King's Night [illegible], Slug's Tavern, 9 & 11:30 pm, free

[illegible] Thompson [illegible], 8 & 10 pm, $10

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Club Fugazi, 8 pm, $25-$72

Generations Jazz: "Battle of the Combos" Yoshi's San Francisco, 8-11:30 pm, $15

[illegible] Top of the Mark, 7:30-11:30 pm, $10

Funk & Pop

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], Annie's Social Club, 7 pm, $5-$10

[illegible] w/ the Crystal [illegible], The Fillmore, 8 pm, $30

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $12

[illegible] w/ the [illegible], the [illegible], & [illegible], 8 pm, $20

The [illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], Hotel Utah, 9 pm, $7

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Cast of Thompson, [illegible] of the Hill, 8 pm, $12

[illegible] w/ the [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] Music Hall, 8 pm, $17-$18

[illegible] w/ the [illegible], The Grand [illegible], 8 pm, $20-$32

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], The Indepen-dent, 9 pm, $18

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] w/ guest Latin fusion [illegible] plus [illegible], & [illegible], 9 pm, $7

FRIDAY 8

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Cafe Van Kleef, 9 pm, $5

[illegible] Rountup Saloon, 9 pm, free

[illegible] featuring John Hammond, Rockin' Buffalo, Sugar Ray Norcia, Rusty Zinn, & more, Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $16-$30, kids' dinner $5

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $20.50-$21.50

[illegible] Bay's Cafe, 7 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Lloyd Gregory [illegible] Anna's Jazz Island, 8 pm, $14

[illegible] dinner and w/ guest [illegible] singers, The Alley, 9 pm, free

Funk & Pop

1-2-3-4 Go Records One-Year Anniversary featuring [illegible], Rock [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], 924 Gilman, 7:30 pm, $7

[illegible] w/ [illegible] & [illegible], 924 Gilman, 7:30 pm, $10

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible] & [illegible], Stork Club, 9 pm, $6

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], Spud's Pizza, 8 pm, $7

The Happy Ending Spud's Pizza, 8 pm, $7-$10 donation

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Stacy Plough, 5 pm, $10

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Paramount Theatre, 8 pm, $38.50

KGE's 10-Year Anniversary featuring the [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], [illegible] on Telegraph, 8 pm, $10

The [illegible] Uptown, 8 pm, $12

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] 33 [illegible] Record Shop & Cafe, 7:30 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible] showcase featuring [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], 19th Street Theater, 8 pm, $6-$10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] w/ [illegible] featuring [illegible], [illegible], 8:30 pm, $12 students $10

[illegible] [illegible] Degrees on Solano, 7:30 pm, free

[illegible] La Peña Cultural Center, 9 pm, $7

[illegible] featuring Los Cenzontles, Los Cenzontles Mexican Arts Center, 7:30 pm, free

[illegible] Thompson, 8 pm, $10-$18

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] w/ [illegible], The Independent, 8 pm, $25

[illegible] Biscuits & Blues, 8 & 10 pm, $20

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], 8 pm, $8-$10

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] performing works by Terry Leon, Paul Yoon Lee, Rusty Evans, & [illegible], Old First Church, 8 pm, $25, seniors $20, students/youth $12

[illegible] w/ [illegible] Orchestra, Swedish American Hall, 7:30 pm, $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Club Fugazi, 8 pm, $25-$72

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $28

[illegible] Revolution Cafe, 8:45 pm, free

Funk & Pop

[illegible] solo performance, Cafe du Nord, 8:30 pm, $15

[illegible] w/ [illegible] & the [illegible], [illegible], Hemlock Tavern, 9:30 pm, $8

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible] of the Hill, 10 pm, $10-$12

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], & the [illegible], Sam's, 7 pm, $12

[illegible] [illegible] Club, 8 pm, $22

[illegible] The Fillmore, 8 pm, $18.50

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Red Devil Lounge, 8 pm, $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] Buena Vista-style Latin dancing w/ [illegible] & [illegible], Peña Pachamama, 9:30 pm, $12-$18

SATURDAY 9

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] & the [illegible], [illegible], Rountup, 9 pm, free

Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowout featuring John Hammond, Rockin' Buffalo, Sugar Ray Norcia, Rusty Zinn, & more, Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $16-$30, kids' dinner $5

[illegible] Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $20.50-$21.50

[illegible] [illegible] on Telegraph, 8 pm, $12-$18

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Stacy Plough, 8 pm, $12

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Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] Cross Une Voltas, 12 pm, free

[illegible] featuring the [illegible] Youth Chorus, First Presbyterian Church, 7 pm, $15-$20, seniors/students $10-$15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] [illegible], 9 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible] Jazz [illegible], 8 pm, $14

[illegible] [illegible], 8 pm, free

[illegible] Cafe Van Kleef, 8 pm, $5

[illegible] The Alley, 9 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Benefit for [illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], & [illegible], [illegible], 8 pm, donation

An Evening w/ [illegible] [illegible], 8:30 pm, free

[illegible] w/ the Soft White Sixties, [illegible] & the Sea, & [illegible], 8 pm, $8

The [illegible] Fox Theater, 8 pm, $22.50

The Soft White Sixties w/ [illegible] Band, the [illegible], & [illegible], BluesClub, 9 pm, $7

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Entertainment [illegible] Carnival, 5 pm, free

Triple Ave. Spud's Pizza, 8 pm, $7-$10

PICKS

Indigo Girls.

Indigo Girls

Even when the **Indigo Girls** were a ways major labels Epic and Hollywood Records, the duo always had the feel of an indie punk act — sweet, singing folkies with a lefty chip on their collective shoulders. The Indigos new album, *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* finds the twosome releasing its first independent album, and, in true iconoclastic fashion, have put out a two-CD set that features plugged-in and acoustic versions of these ten new songs (along with a bonus cut on the unplugged portion). Filled with the expected mix of cutting harmonies, acoustic jangle, and enough strum-and-twang to evoke artists ranging from Joni Mitchell and the Band to R.E.M. Emily Saliers and Amy Ray address everything from colonialism and fallen friends to love's endurance. The Indigos will be finding its brand of out spoken social [illegible] to the masses on Wednesday, May 13, at **Zellerbach Hall** (UC Berkeley, Berkeley). 8 p.m. $38.50. Calperformances.org. — *Dave Gil de Rubio*

Nobunny

That growly punk rocker with the bunny headpiece and the secret microphone returns to Berkeley's **924 Gilman** this Saturday, May 9, and this time he's at the top of the bill. **Nobunny** will headline a terrific lineup of trash rock bands, including the **Ringers**, **the Rock N Roll Adventure Kids**, **Street Eaters** (featuring members of the Fleshies) and **Shaweell**. These groups are known for combining a classic rockabilly form with irreverent lyrics, and making everything sound like it was conceived in a garbage can. They'll put on a great show especially for audience members who feel nostalgia for the old punk fests and Spam Records parties of ten years ago. 7:30 p.m., $7. 924Gilman.org — *Rachel Swan*

Pusaka Sunda Gamelan Degung

Pusaka Sunda Gamelan Degung was created by San Jose-based suling (flute) player, master musician, and composer Burhan Sukarma in 1988. The group's name translates as "heirloom of Sunda," and a degung is a small gamelan ensemble. Pusaka Sunda Gamelan Degung is a ten-piece group that plays waves of rippling, interlock ing rhythms on resonant brass gongs to support the free-flowing improvisations of Sukarma's suling. This ensemble includes Javanese and American musicians who create music with hypnotic, deeply soothing melodies highlighted by the bright, chiming accents of the high-pitched peking. Pusaka Sunda Gamelan Degung performs at the **Jazzschool** (2087 Addison St., Berkeley) on Friday, May 8. 8 p.m., $10-$15. Jazzschool.com — *j. poet*

Chamber Music Sundaes

Chamber Music Sundaes always showcases members of the San Francisco Symphony occasionally joined by friends. This Sunday, May 10, at **St. John's Presbyterian Church** (2727 College Ave., Berkeley), the players perform Emanuel Moor's "Serenade" for two cellos (featuring David Goldblatt and Carolyn McIntosh) and string quartets by Beethoven (featuring the California Chamber Players) and Borodin (performed by violinist Daniel Carlson and viola player Joy Fellows). 3 p.m., $20-25. ChamberMusicSundaes.org or 415-753-2792 — *Jason Victor Serinus*

standees

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Nosotras La Peña Cultural Center, 8 pm, $13-$15

Yiña y Su Son de Diosh plus Cuban dance lesson at 8:30 p.m. Ashkenaz, 9:30 pm, $13, [illegible]

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

The Whereabouts Mill Valley Ministry, 8:15 pm, $15-$17

Nick Castro & the Nightcalls [illegible] Blues, 9 & 11 pm, $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Benefit Release/Babylon Club Fugazi, 7 & 10 pm, $25-$77

Keiko Gakaaki Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $20

Harris Allyson [illegible] Theater, 2 pm, $15

Rock & Pop

Release hosted by Bob Mould & Rich Morel, Slim's, 10 pm, $15

Cockroge solo performance, Swedish American Hall, 8 pm, $15

Dispatch CD Release w/ Bill Pitts, the Spinners, & more. The Knockout, 8 pm, TBA

Rock & Roll Happy Hour Show w/ local bands, The Parkside, 3-8 pm, free

Julie Blake and the Pick Army w/ Social Unrest, Ricky Fix My Head, & the Estuary. Annie's Social Club, 8:30 pm, $10

Nias w/ Barathum, Persin L. & Aurrans, Bottom of the Hill, 8:55 pm, $15-$18

Mike Doughty The Independent, 11 pm, $19

The Parsons Red Heads w/ the Morelands, Evolution in Skipping, Hemlock Tavern, 9:30 pm, $6

[illegible] Release Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $12-$14

Super Diamond Venue's 505 Club, 8 pm, $22

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Pete Escovedo and His Orchestra Cinco de Mayo celebration, Fla Chic Theater, 8 & 10:30 pm, $25

Sill Hyle CD Release Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10

SUNDAY 10

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Blues Harmonica Release featuring John Hammond, Norton Buffalo, Sugar Ray Norcia, Rusty Zinn, & more, Yoshi's, 2 & 7 pm, $18-$30, kids matinee $5

Rhythm Release Peter's Restaurant, 5 pm, free

Traditional Irish Music with Shay Black Starry Plough, 8 pm, sliding scale

Classical & Opera

Domestic Music Benefit featuring San Francisco Symphony musicians and friends, St. John's Presbyterian Church, 3 pm, $20-$25

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Carlos Oliveira's Brazilian Origins featuring Harvey Wainapel, Anna's Jazz Island, 8 pm, $12

Jim Grantham Jazz Quartet classic & contemporary jazz, Coffee Mill, 3-6 pm, free

Mamoun's Domestic Ebony's Black & Jazz Jam Zion's Waterfront Restaurant and Nightclub, 5-11 p.m., $10

Rhythm Release roadhouse blues, Peter's Restaurant, 5 pm, free

Sunday Hang & Jazz Anna's Jazz Island, 3 pm, $5

Terrence Brewer Trio Metro, 6:30-9 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Billy and the Thrillers pre-season, Silver Shelter, 8-10 pm, free

The Dead Shoreline Amphitheatre, 7 pm, $45-$125

The Pyrate Punx Domestic Bands at 3 p.m. & music starts at 3 p.m. w/ free [illegible] bands, John Patrick's, 4 pm, $6

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Lavern Nelson and the Domestic Blues Rudeman's, 8 pm, $12

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Brasilian de Madrid Santa Flores Mother's Day celebration featuring Los Bomberas de la Island, Cafe Valparaiso, 3-5:30 pm, free

Domestic de Flores Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $20.50-$21.50

[illegible] Black Bay's Cafe, 7 pm, free

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5/16 DOOR 9PM $15 www.ticketweb.com
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FLOWTILLA FRI 5/8
Live Flowtilla play a sophisticated blend of psychedelic world groove jazz-funk: "The group takes a theme or a rhythm and they run with it." www.flowtilla.com

RWH & The JAZZ TRIAD SAT 5/9
Live Robert W Hoffman has been playing drums for 50 years. As bandleader/drummer with the RWH Jazz Triad his focus is to bring a sophisticated, tight, executed New York/East Coast [illegible] of sound and jazz excellence via the Bay Area. Tonight they'll be celebrating their [illegible] CD album release "Chords for a New Day" www.rwhjazztriad.com

AMERICANA UNPLUGGED: 49 SPECIAL SUN 5/10
Live Bluegrass and more bluegrass this week. They're a young band with an old [illegible]. Sweet harmonies and a serious attitude toward their music give these guys continuing authority. California style! www.myspace.com/fortyninespecial

JOHN RICHARDSON BAND WED 5/13
Live Guitarist/songwriter John Richardson leads this band described as two parts funky, melodic, swinging, left hook R&B, one part jazz, one part blues, & one part country myspace.com/johnrichardsonband

This Week's Featured Beers
[illegible]

C&C

[illegible], Shannon, Silly Sundays kids show Ashkenaz, 3-4:30 pm, $6, Both $4

Soul of the Mahala Balkan music w/ Brass Salt, Ashkenaz, 4:30 pm, $13-$15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Lounge Encore & Grand 8 & 10 pm, $15

It's a Free Country Sunday w/ local acts, Thee Parkside, 4 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible], Skip's Tavern, 6:30 & 8:30 pm, free

[illegible] Plough and Stars, 9 pm, free

Classical & Opera

[illegible] Top of the Mark, 10 am-2 pm, $59 for brunch plus gratuity and tax

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] w/ Fred Frith, [illegible], Great American Music Hall 8 pm, $17-$19

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Beach Blanket Babylon Club Fugazi, 2 & 5 pm, $25-$77

[illegible] Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $28

[illegible] [illegible] Symphony Hall, 7 pm, $25-$30

Vince Lateano & Friends featuring Andrew Speight, Sam Grobe-Heintz, & Mark [illegible]

[illegible] Saloon, 4:30-8:30 pm, $5

Rock & Pop

[illegible] w/ Lost Puppy, Plastic Saints, B D Jelly [illegible], Annie's Social Club, 7 pm, $8

Christopher [illegible] Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $10

[illegible] w/ Tamaryn, Hemlock Tavern, 8 pm, $6

[illegible] w/ [illegible], 8 pm, $15

[illegible] Love w/ Paper Route, Bottom of The Hill, 8 pm, $10-$12

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] Ensemble Peña Pachamama, 8:30 pm, $18

[illegible] A Cappella Singers w/ Habib Yassi Ensemble, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum, 1-3 pm, free

"Salsa Sundays" w/ rotating live bands, salsa dance lessons, El Rio, 3 pm, $8

MONDAY 11

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Bluegrass Jam McGrath's Pub, 7:30 pm, free

[illegible] Starry Plough, 7 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$18

"Uptown Hubba Hubba" live burlesque w/ Hubba Hubba Revue, Uptown, 9 pm, $6

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

Parlor Tango Argentine tango, Cafe [illegible], 7-8 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Cafe du Nord, 9:30 pm, $10

[illegible] Ireland's 32 Bar & Grill, 8 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] w/ Kenny Washington, Jazz at Pearl's, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$15

Jazz Mondays Peña Pachamama, 8 pm, $20

Rock & Pop

Bob Schneider w/ [illegible], [illegible], The Independent, 8 pm, $20

[illegible] Johnny Foley's Irish House, 9 pm, free

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], 8 pm, $6

[illegible] Annie's Social Club, 8 pm, $5

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] w/ special [illegible], San Francisco, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$12

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

"Club Dread" featuring national, international, & local [illegible] bands, Club Six, 8 pm, $10

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Albatross Pub 1822 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley 510-843-2473 AlbatrossPub.com

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Amoeba Music 2455 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley 510-549-1125

Anna's Jazz Island 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley 510-841-5299

[illegible] [illegible] Martinez, [illegible]

Ashkenaz 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-525-5054

[illegible] 4825 Hopyard, Pleasanton 925-426-1111

[illegible] 5616 Bay St., Emeryville

Beckett's 2271 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-647-1790

[illegible] 2131 Franklin St., Oakland, 510-444-2266

[illegible] for the Arts 3201 [illegible] St., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] 1252 Arroyo Way, Walnut Creek, 925-979-0132

[illegible] 22001 B St., Hayward, 510-886-6525

[illegible] Telegraph 2301 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

Blakes on Telegraph (upstairs) 2367 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-0886

[illegible] 1800 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley 510-548-[illegible]

[illegible] 115 E. Vineyard Ave., Livermore 925-[illegible]

Club [illegible] 1220 Pine St., Walnut Creek, 925-938-4550

Club Anton 428 3rd St., Oakland, 510-463-[illegible]

Club [illegible] 125 12th St., Oakland 510-[illegible]

Coffee Mill 3363 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] Ferry St., [illegible], 925-229-3341

[illegible] Lounge 5422 College Ave., Oakland, 510-469-2081

[illegible] Sports Bar 1524 [illegible], Walnut Creek, 925-932-1320

Eagles Hall 2305 Alameda Ave., Alameda, 415-285-[illegible]

Easy Lounge 3255 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland 510-338-4911

Everett & Jones Barbeque 126 Broadway, Oakland, 510-663-2350

First Congregational Church 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley 510-848-3696

First Presbyterian Church 2619 Broadway, Oakland 510-444-3555

Fox Oakland 1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, TheFoxOakland.com

[illegible] [illegible], Berkeley, 510-[illegible]

Freight & Salvage 1111 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-548-1761

Hertz Hall UC Berkeley (Bancroft Way at College Ave.), Berkeley, 510-642-9988

[illegible] [illegible] St., Alameda, 510-[illegible]

Jazzschool 2087 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-845-5373

Jewish Community Center of the East Bay 1414 Walnut St., Berkeley, 510-848-0237

[illegible] 1223 Park St., Alameda, 510-865-2385

Jupiter 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-8277

[illegible] 1408 [illegible] St., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

Kimball's Carnival 522 2nd St., Oakland, 510-444-6979

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Kingman's Lucky Lounge 3332 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-465-5464

[illegible] 858 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-526-5888

Kitty's 6702 Hollis St., Emeryville, 510-601-5050

La Peña Cultural Center 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-849-2568

La Luz de [illegible] [illegible] Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-[illegible]

Lake Merritt United Methodist Church 1330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland 510-465-4793

[illegible] Baptist Church 3534 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland 510-[illegible]

Laney College Theater 900 Fallon St., Oakland, 510-464-3543

[illegible] Lounge [illegible], Alameda, 510-523-4700

[illegible] 2221 Broadway, Oakland, 510-451-4677

Maxwell's Lounge 341 13th Street, Oakland, 510-839-6169

[illegible] Lounge 2000 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2080

Nomad Cafe 6500 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, 510-595-5344

Oakland City Center [illegible] 12th St., Oakland 510-238-[illegible]

Oakland Metro Operahouse 630 3rd St., Oakland 510-763-1146

ORACLE Arena 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland 510-569-2121

Paramount Theatre 2025 Broadway, Oakland 510-465-6400

[illegible] 32 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette 925-284-[illegible]

Pleasanton Hotel 855 Main St., Pleasanton, 925-846-8106

Quinn's Lighthouse 1951 Embarcadero Cove, Oakland 510-536-2050

[illegible] 435 13th St., Oakland 510-451-2889

[illegible] 3553 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, 925-284-4817

Ruby Room 132 14th St., Oakland 510-444-7224

Saddle Rack 42011 Boscell Rd., Fremont, 510-979-0477

[illegible] 2284 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 510-548-1159

[illegible] 2438 San Ramon Valley Blvd (Ste 130) San Ramon

[illegible] 2424 Lincoln Ave., Alameda 510-[illegible]

St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 510-848-5107

St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave., Berkeley 510-845-6830

Starry Plough 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-2082

Stork Club 2330 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-444-6174

[illegible] 484 E. 14th St., San Leandro 510-553-[illegible]

Uptown 1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-451-8100

Velvet 3411 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland 510-531-3328

[illegible] 2272 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland 510-451-[illegible]

[illegible] Bar & Grill 2045 Mt. Diablo St., Concord, 925-685-8585

[illegible] 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore 925-456-2456

[illegible] Auditorium UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-4250

[illegible] Inn 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland 510-[illegible]

Yoshi's 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland 510-238-9200

Zellerbach Hall UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-9988

Zza's Trattoria 552 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-839-9124 [illegible] w/ the [illegible] Live Band. [illegible], 8 pm, $8-$10

TUESDAY 12

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Country [illegible] Night w/ [illegible], [illegible] 7:30-11 pm, free

The Pine Leaf Boys plus Cajun dance lesson at [illegible] Ashkenaz, 8:30 pm, $18

[illegible] Pete's Restaurant, 7:30-9 pm, free

Sylvia Herold & [illegible] Julie's Coffee & Tea Garden, 7-9 pm, free

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] Trio w/ [illegible], 21 Grand Gallery/Performance Space, 8 pm, $8-$10

Gospel & Vocal

[illegible] Harmony Chorus community [illegible] w/ world music repertoire, open to all ages and experience levels. Lake [illegible] Church, 7:30 pm, $12

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$25

[illegible] & [illegible] Anthony [illegible], 7-9 pm, free

[illegible] Tuesdays [illegible], 8 pm, free

[illegible] The Alley, 9 pm, free

[illegible] Lounge Six [illegible] Santos Place, noon, free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

"[illegible]" party/event includes a specialty gourmet buffet, live entertainment, [illegible] drinks. [illegible] Restaurant and [illegible], 8 pm, $10

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] [illegible], 8 pm, $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Jazz Mafia Trio Rosa's, 7 pm, $5

[illegible] [illegible] Club, 9:30 pm, $10

Rock & Pop

[illegible] w/ Say Hi, [illegible], The Independent, 8 pm, $11

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], Call the Paramedics, [illegible] & [illegible], DNA Lounge, 8 pm, $10-$12

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], Cafe du Nord, 9:30 pm, $10-$12

[illegible] & the [illegible] w/ the [illegible], [illegible] Tavern, 9 pm, $8

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Bottom of the Hill, 9 pm, $10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Late Night Live Tuesdays Yoshi's San Francisco, 10:30 pm-1 am, $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] [illegible] duo, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $35

WEDNESDAY 13

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Eric Bibb Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18.50-$19.50

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Trio featuring [illegible] & [illegible], Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $10-$15

[illegible] Big [illegible] [illegible], 9 pm, $10

[illegible] The Alley, 8 pm, free

Rock & Pop

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], 8 pm, $5

[illegible] [illegible] Hall, 8 pm, $38.50

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] [illegible], 8 pm, $10, [illegible] $5

[illegible] Berkeley [illegible] Arts [illegible] [illegible] Longfellow Middle School Jazz Band, [illegible] Dance [illegible], La [illegible] & the [illegible], 7 pm, $8, [illegible] $5

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] & [illegible] Lynch [illegible], 8 pm, $7-$10

[illegible] [illegible], 8 & 10 pm, $15

[illegible] and the [illegible] w/ the [illegible], [illegible] & Billy [illegible], Hotel Utah, 8:30 pm, $6

Classical & Opera

Jennifer [illegible] performing works by [illegible], [illegible] & Fauré on cello, [illegible], 6:30 pm, $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Club Fugazi, 8 pm, $25-$77

[illegible] and the [illegible] Top of the Mark, 7:30-11:30 pm, $10

[illegible] [illegible] birthday tribute, The [illegible], 8 pm, $10-$15

Rock & Pop

Amy [illegible] w/ [illegible], All & the [illegible], 8 pm, $8

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], 8 pm, $7

[illegible] w/ [illegible], Cafe du Nord, 8:30 pm, $12

[illegible] w/ [illegible], [illegible], Bottom of the Hill, 8:30 pm, $8

The [illegible] Lounge Red Devil Lounge, 8 pm

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

[illegible] Pier 23, 8 pm, free

[illegible] [illegible] duo, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $35

CLUB DIRECTORY

SAN FRANCISCO

[illegible] Club [illegible] Hyde St., 415-440-0222

[illegible] 330 [illegible] St., 415-543-0524

[illegible] 1855 Haight St., 415-831-1200

[illegible] Social Club 567 Folsom St., 415-974-1585

[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-271-5618

[illegible] & Lounge 1 Tillman Pl., 415-392-0150

[illegible] Restaurant and Wine [illegible] 448 Embarcadero St., 415-394-4100

[illegible] 3921 California St., 415-831-5070

[illegible] 1000 Great Highway, 415-386-8439

[illegible] 2298 [illegible] St., 415-285-0323

[illegible] 1735 Columbus Ave., 415-474-0365

[illegible] 411 Mason St., 415-292-2583

[illegible] 1233 17th St., 415-626-4455

[illegible] 2338 [illegible] St., 415-643-5200

Cafe du Nord 2170 Market St., 415-861-5016

[illegible] 508 Haight St., 415-558-7138

[illegible] 605 Vallejo St., 415-982-2605

[illegible] 1190 Folsom St., 415-431-3332

Catalyst Cocktails 312 Harriet St., 415-621-1722

The Cellar 685 Sutter St., 415-441-5678

[illegible] 215 8th St., 415-280-0850

[illegible] 826 [illegible] St., 415-421-4222

[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]

[illegible] Symphony Hall 201 Van Ness Ave., 415-864-6000

[illegible] 2801 Leavenworth St., 415-775-5110

DNA Lounge 375 11th St., 415-626-1409

[illegible] 2490 3rd St., 415-643-0592

The Eagle Tavern 398 12th St., 415-626-0880

[illegible] 1 [illegible] St., 415-885-4074

[illegible] 2710 16th St., 415-437-9240

[illegible] 1158 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]

[illegible] 647 Valencia St., 415-[illegible]

[illegible] Lounge 1028 Geary St., 415-[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]

The Fillmore 1805 Geary Blvd., 415-346-6000

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[illegible] 3225 22nd St., 415-647-2888

[illegible] 444 Jessie St., 415-[illegible]

The [illegible] Room 66 West Portal Ave.

[illegible] 3011 [illegible] St., 415-454-5238

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[illegible] 817 [illegible] St., 415-346-3930

[illegible] Bar 541 Geary St., 415-931-7292

[illegible] 541 [illegible] St.

[illegible] 1000 17th St., 415-[illegible]

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SAT 10PM OAKLAND FADERS, 4ONEFUNK & FINGERBANGERZ
SUN 9PM SOUL FULL DJ [illegible] Soul new & old, hip hop, reggae, funk & house
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THU 5/7 8:30 pm $8-$15 sliding scale HIP HOP/FUNK/ROOTS COMMUNITY ROOTS A collective event for community activation, empowerment & celebration [illegible], Lucky Otis, [illegible] Band of Mystics 7:30 pm Panel Discussion on Food, Land and Equity
FRI 5/8 9:30 pm $12 $10 students AFRICAN/ROCK FUSION EXTRA GOLDEN + MAKURU featuring [illegible] KOUYATE
SAT 5/9 9:30 pm $13 $10 students TRADITIONAL CUBAN TITO Y SU SON DE CUBA 8:30 pm Cuban [illegible]
SUN 5/10 3:00 pm $6 adults/$4 kids "SILLY SUNDAYS" KIDS SHOW THE NIGERIAN BROTHERS Authentic West African folk songs & stories
SUN 5/10 6:00 pm [illegible] REGGAE DJ NIGHT DJ EDWIN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY!
TUE 5/12 8:30 pm $18 CAJUN/CREOLE FROM LOUISIANA THE PINE LEAF BOYS 8:30 pm Cajun/Zydeco [illegible] with Cheryl [illegible]
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DJ & DANCE

THURSDAY 7

EAST BAY

The Big Man of the House DJ Gary B spins house & disco music. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 10 pm. free

College Night w/ DJ and MC Joe G. spinning hip-hop, R&B, dancehall, & Top-40. White Horse Inn. 9 pm. $3, students free w/ valid ID.

College Night DJ [illegible] spins hip-hop, club hits, & Top 40 for college students only 18+ (w/ valid ID). Blakes on Telegraph. 9:30 pm. $2-$10 sliding scale

DJ Add1 spinning eclectic [illegible]. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

Dutch Hour w/ DJ Windsor spinning reggae, Afrobeat, salsa, cumbia, [illegible]. Kitty's. 7 pm. free

House of Windsor the Duke of Windsor, Sir Trey & the Mystic Lady spin '60s garage rock, psychedelia, powerpop, & glam. Windsor Lounge. 10 pm. free

Tasty ladies' night w/ DJ [illegible] spinning hip-hop & R&B. Beach & Bar. 9 pm. $12

Thursday Throwdown w/ DJ Ron the Vinyl Archaeologist and guests spinning hip-hop, funk, '80s, [illegible] funk, & soul. [illegible] 9 pm. free

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SAN FRANCISCO

Bantkade w/ [illegible] spinning [illegible]. Elbo Room. 10 pm. $8

Dance Party w/ DJs Aaron and Nate. 330 Ritch. 10 pm. $5-$10

FRIDAY 8

EAST BAY

Salsa Explosion DJ Jorge Colleon spins [illegible], merengue, banda, Spanish pop & house. Beach & Bar. 9 pm-2 am. $12

Mighty Irie DJs [illegible] & Smoke [illegible] reggae, dancehall, & hip-hop. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 10 pm. $10

Bossa Tropical Lounge DJ Jose Ruiz spinning Cuban music & Latin jazz. La Tasa de Cafe. 10:30 pm. [illegible]

Tearsday [illegible] funk, Latin, & [illegible]. Easy Lounge. 10 pm. free

Retro-Deluxe [illegible] night. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

Soulful Fridays DJ [illegible] spin R&B & soul. [illegible] 9 pm. $5

SAN FRANCISCO

Dirtybird Windsor Spring Pajama [illegible] featuring Claude VonStroke, [illegible]. 10 pm. $10-$15

Cinco de Mayo 2009 w/ [illegible]. 10 pm. $15

SATURDAY 9

EAST BAY

Angel Magic [illegible] spin hip-hop, reggae, & dancehall, students [illegible] 9 pm. $15

Club Maxwell's [illegible] lounge spin R&B, soul, funk, reggae & hip-hop. Maxwell's Lounge. 9 pm. $20

A Dance & Sexy Affair w/ DJs [illegible] reggae [illegible] & hip-hop. Kalibbean City. 9 pm. $15

Magic Milk Dance DJ Blood & [illegible]. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

Ta-Dow!!! [illegible] spin classic party [illegible]. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. $10

SAN FRANCISCO

Tormenta Tropical w/ [illegible] Paul Devro [illegible] & DJs [illegible]. 10 pm. $10

Viva V [illegible] 9:30 pm. $15

SUNDAY 10

EAST BAY

DJ Kibble spinning reggae and Caribbean. [illegible] 6 pm. free

DJ Woods spinning salsa [illegible] Weekend [illegible]. Club Anton. 9:30 pm. $5

DJs Martin & Paolo spin R&B, old-school. Kitty's. 7 pm. free

Speakeasy Sunday DJ Speakeasy spins [illegible] & more. Easy Lounge. 6 pm. free

King of Kings w/ Smoke-One and guests spin reggae, dancehall, [illegible]. 9 pm. $5, $4 w/ [illegible] students

Soul-Full w/ DJ [illegible] spinning soul, hip-hop, reggae, funk, & house. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. free

Sunday School w/ DJs spinning funk, soul, acid jazz, [illegible] and house [illegible]. Taproom & Lounge. 3-5 pm. free

Dancehall & Soul Sundays DJs spin house, soul & R&B for Chicago-style stepping. [illegible] Bar & Grill. 7 pm-2 am. [illegible]

Working Stiffs DJ [illegible] & old school R&B [illegible]. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Dub Mission w/ DJ Sep, Maneesh the Twister & guests spinning dub, [illegible] & dancehall. Elbo Room. 9 pm. $8

Healing Firm DJ [illegible] & guests spin reggae [illegible]. Underground SF. 9 pm. free before 10:30 pm. $6

Happy Sundays w/ Honey Soundsystem DJs spinning dance music. [illegible] Lounge. 8 pm. free

Dance Well with DJ [illegible] fundraiser for [illegible] Scholarship [illegible]. 6 pm. [illegible]

MONDAY 11

EAST BAY

The 3-Day Weekend w/ DJ [illegible] spinning [illegible] local students. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Jorge spinning dub, ska, & soul. Easy Lounge. 9 pm. free

Irie Mondays DJs Ruddy & Greg spin reggae & dancehall. Kitty's. 9 pm. [illegible]

[illegible] w/ [illegible] 4 p.m.-8 p.m. & later 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Club 1220. 4 pm-2 pm. free

Latino Lunes [illegible] competition. Beach & Bar. 9 pm. TBA

Breaking Night [illegible] spin hip-hop, new wave, [illegible]. Ruby Room. 10 pm-2 am. free

Underground Lounge psyche '60s & [illegible] '70s music. [illegible] 10 pm-2 pm. free

Working Stiffs DJ David [illegible] & old-school hip-hop & dancehall, staff. Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

SAN FRANCISCO

Skylarking w/ DJs Mr. Lucky & [illegible] spinning [illegible], dancehall, and reggae. Skylark. 9:30 pm. free

[illegible] w/ [illegible]. 7:30 pm. $10

TUESDAY 12

EAST BAY

Country Music Night plus line dancing. Club 1220. 9 pm. free

DJ Dance Video Kingman's Lucky Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ Weekend spinning indie, punk, hardcore & metal. [illegible] Lounge. 10 pm-2 am. free

DJ Joe Quiaz spinning salsa & salsa funk. Easy Lounge. 9 pm. free

DJ [illegible] w/ [illegible] spinning hip-hop and club classics. Kitty's. 9:30 pm. free

DJ Wordy spinning punk, [illegible] Weekend Lounge. 9 pm-2 am. free

Soul Pyre DJs [illegible] reggae [illegible]. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. [illegible]

[illegible] Tuesdays DJ spinning hip-hop & old-school. Blakes on Telegraph (upstairs). 10:30 pm. [illegible]

[illegible] w/ DJs spinning rock, soft hits, oldies, & soul. Ruby Room. 10 pm. [illegible]

WEDNESDAY 13

EAST BAY

Voodoo Wednesdays DJ [illegible] & rotating [illegible] spin salsa, rumba, [illegible] reggaeton, & hip-hop, plus salsa [illegible] Weekend. 9 pm. Luka's Taproom & Lounge. 9 pm. free

PICK

Laser Sword & Mophono

Parts of SOMA are closer to Oakland than Berkeley is if you time it right, so ditch the East Bay just this once, because the tightest DJing Friday night looks like it might come from a show by **Laser Sword and Mophono** — two of the town's finest producers. Laser Sword is fresh off a European tour and is getting big-ups in *XLR8R* magazine. Mophono has collaborated with notables Flying Lotus, Gaslamp Killer, and Amon Tobin, and put out three LPs on CS Records, a label that helps bring these future sounds to the **Paradise Lounge** (1501 Folsom, San Francisco) on Friday, May 8, for a second helping of what they dub "dance report." Expect high-tempo "Future Bap" (Bay-a slang for a "banging track") with some seriously heavy bass, rappin', and, dare we add — booty shakin'. We dare. 10 p.m. $5 with RSVP. E-mail: LaserSword@theRoswell.com. — *David Downs*

SAVAGE LOVE

ENCOURAGING A GAY SON TO MAKE OUT

But go slow on the sex stuff

By Dan Savage

My fourteen-year-old son just came out to me. He has a slightly older boyfriend, and they're going to the school dance on Saturday night. I am adjusting to a truth I have long suspected. I am worried, though, that my son will get hurt. We live in the South — North Carolina — but our town has a gay community and an annual pride parade. When I asked him if the other students at school would be cool with him bringing a boy, he said, "Who cares?" Bullying is not a huge problem at his school.

We have had the sex talk several times, but I have always assumed a hetero approach. I think my son is too young for sleepovers with his boyfriend, and I would really like him to wait a couple more years before he gets seriously sexually active, though I expect petting and kissing are a given. Any advice?

Still My Son

Treat your son to some of that equal treatment we gay people are always going on about, SMS, and treat him just like you'd treat your fourteen-year-old straight kid. No responsible parent would allow her fourteen-year-old daughter — and that's how you should think of him for now (more on that in a moment) — to have sleepovers with her slightly older boyfriend, right? So no sleepovers for your gay kid. Remember: You can be supportive and be his advocate without signing off on stuff you wouldn't sign off on for a straight child — indeed, it's the best way to show your support.

What else can you do? You can hover, scrutinize, interfere — all the crap that parents typically do when their children begin to date. For instance, SMS, this boy your son is seeing? Have you met him? Meet him. How much older is he? Find out. Are they messing around? Ask them. Make sure your son understands that he doesn't have to engage in anal intercourse to be authentically gay, or all grown up, or out. He can take things slow — he should take things slow. Encourage your son to date, to hold hands, to make out. And you should, as awkward as it's going to feel to say so aloud, encourage your son, when he does become sexually active, to stick with mutual masturbation and oral sex for a good, long time — until he's sure he's ready for intercourse, not just anxious for it.

Getting back to the daughter business: You should also regard your son, at least through his adolescence, as more of a daughter to you than a son. We tend to be more protective of our daughters — our straight daughters — than we are of our sons. Why? A sexist desire to keep our daughters "pure"? That's a part of it, sure, but there's also this: Men are pigs, and people on the receiving end of male sexual desire/attention are in more danger than people on the receiving end of female sexual desire/attention. (In general — individual results may vary.) Testosterone is the crystal meth of hormones, a badass drug, and men are more likely to be abusive and violent. The prevalence of HIV among gay men makes the stakes higher for your son. So don't allow him to date anyone you don't get to meet and approve of, and don't confuse "being supportive" with "letting him do whatever/whomever he wants." Be active, be engaged, and never stop being his meddling, interfering, hyper-suspicious dad.

Good luck, SMS. It sounds like your son lucked out having you as a parent.

I've been seeing this guy for about two years in August. We've been living together for six months now, and it's been REALLY bumpy. We fight a lot. I cry a lot, and it just gets really messy. To tell you the truth, I'm tired of it. I work two jobs, and I never get any time to myself because he's moody and insecure. He always wants to know where I'm going or who I'm with. He doesn't like to do the same things I do, and I'm beginning to think this is all one big mistake. The problem is every time I try to leave, it always gets ugly. Ugly to the point that he's thrown my stuff in the front yard, broken things of mine, and even called me names. He's abusive.

As sad as this sounds, and as ridiculous as I feel, I want to make this work. I want us to be happy. And the thing is, I know that we can be. When we're mad, it's like World War III over here. But when we're happy, it's so blissful that I know in my heart with him is the only place I want to be. What can I do? People tell me it's time to sever ties, but the people who usually tell me this are the ones who can't stand him. How can I make a completely unbiased decision? Am I stupid for believing in a love that feels destined to fail?

Hopelessly Devoted To Him

This is not a relationship, HDTH. It's a hostage situation. He's a controlling, abusive piece of shit — listen to your fucking friends, HDTH. When your boyfriend breaks your shit, he's making an implicit threat: I can break your face just as easily as I'm breaking your shit, bitch, so don't even think about leaving me. And of course things are great when they're great — that's part of an abuser's MO. If abusers were abusive 24/7 — if they weren't capable of doling out a little bliss now and then — no abusive relationship would last longer than one date. Like all abusers, he parcels out the good times, doping you up with a little bliss now and then, because he knows that these glimpses of how great things could be convince you to stick around against your better judgment.

The bliss is a con, HDTH, a weapon that he uses against you, just as much a part of the cycle of abuse as his tantrums, fits, and threats of violence are. Think of the good times as rainbow sprinkles on a dog-shit sundae — sprinkles or no sprinkles, you're still standing there with a bowl full of dog shit in your hands.

Get a couple of friends to come over when he's at work or out of town, box up your shit, and leave. You can't change him. Go.

Apropos of nothing: Savage, you fucking suck ass.

You And Your Column Both Suck

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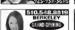
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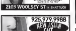
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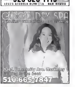
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EAST BAY EXPRESS Classifieds

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Buy, Sell, Trade 58
Employment 59
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Bulletin Board 60

Contact Us: Ads can be placed Mon - Fri during business hours by calling 510-879-3800 or by E-mailing Cla[illegible]BayExpress.com

Online: Line ads also available at EastBayExpress.com

Ad Deadline: Classified advertising deadline is Monday 4pm.

LEGAL NOTICES

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423020
The following individual is doing business as [illegible]. Street Address: 2443 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, CA 94501. [illegible]
4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423028
[illegible]
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423102
[illegible]
& Merchandising
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423103
[illegible]
& Engraving
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423020
[illegible]
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423042
[illegible]
4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 420520
[illegible]
Hayward Cyclepath
5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 5/27/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423021
[illegible]
Acer Tree Service
4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 424281
[illegible]
All Antique Trade and Restoration
5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 5/27/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 423830
[illegible]
4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20/2009

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
[illegible]
4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20/2009

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[illegible]

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[illegible]
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
[illegible]
4/22, 4/29, 5/6, 5/13/2009

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
[illegible]
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 424006
[illegible]
4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6/2009

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[illegible]

www.customleaf.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DIRECTV
[illegible]

COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

[illegible]
Cinco de Mayo Carnival
[illegible]

MUSICIAN SERVICES

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[illegible]

BRL Rehearsal Studios
[illegible]

Affordable Analog Recording
[illegible]

MUSIC INSTRUCTION

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[illegible]

AUTO/TRUCKS

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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[illegible]

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[illegible]

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[illegible]
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Oakland, CA
510-653-0212

Flora
[illegible]

Gravy
Breed: Poodle [illegible]
Color: Grey
Sex: Male, neutered
Age: 3 years
Description: Gravy is an out going, easy to get along with guy. He likes people, other dogs and [illegible]
Berkeley East Bay Humane Society
2700 9th Street, Berkeley
510-845-7735
www.berkeleyhumane.org

Tristan and Isolde
Breed: Domestic Short Hair
Color: Black and white tuxedo and torbie
Sex: Male, neutered and female spayed
Age: 5 years
Description: The bonded brother and sister duo must find a new home together. They sleep, play and groom each other. Tristan is the more adventurous, outgoing of the two. Isolde is the mellow lap cat. They are wonderful [illegible]
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2700 9th Street, Berkeley
510-845-7735
www.berkeleyhumane.org

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Breed: German Shepherd mix
Color: brown, grey and white
Sex: female spayed
Age: 8 months
Description: Verikai is a beautiful, smart and active girl. She will need an active home that can [illegible]
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2700 9th Street, Berkeley
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www.berkeleyhumane.org

Employment

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[illegible]

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Models Wanted
[illegible]

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[illegible]

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[illegible]

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[illegible]

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11am to 5pm at our fields located behind Edendale Middle school at 16160 Ashland Ave. San Lorenzo. Free admission. Game booth tickets 25 cents each. Food, Games, fun, music and more! Come out and support our teams and our community!
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